Labour Monthly

EDITED BY R. PALME DUTT

LABOUR'S CHOICE

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LABOUR MONTHLY

A Magazine of International Labour

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NOTES OF THE MONTH

Labour's Last Chance ?—The Record of Twenty Years—The First Chance After the War—What Might Have Been—"The Inevitability of Gradualism"—The Second Chance—The Labour Government of 1924—The Labour Government of 1929—The Third Chance—Win or Lose All—The Paradox of British Politics—Why Chamberlain Holds Power—The "Tacit Understanding"—Emergencies and Emergencies—The Veiled Coalition—Striking at the Heart of Democracy—Suicide While of Unsound Mind ?—Chamberlain and Hindenburg—Conscription—What Southport Can Do—The First Step—A Parable for Our Times

AT the Whitsuntide Conference at Southport this month the Labour Party enters on a testing which will determine, not only its prospects of power, but even its prospects of survival. Is it exaggerated to suggest that in the present political situation the Labour Party is approaching its last chance—a last chance which carries with it, not only the future of the working-class movement, but the future of democracy in Britain and of peace in the world ? We sincerely hope that such an estimate may be proved exaggerated in the light of events ; for the present degree of very incomplete preparedness and awakening, not to say of blind and fatal complacency on the part of the leadership and existing policy, leaves no room for self-satisfaction or light-hearted optimism. But it is necessary to recognise in all sober realism that the present situation is serious, the most serious since the foundation of the modern working-class movement, and that the present pace of events does not allow of indefinite postponements. The warning signal of the terrible writing on the wall, which has appeared for the labour movement in country after country of Europe, and has appeared too often in vain—*Mene, Mene, Tekel Upharsim*, "Thou art

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weighed in the balance and found wanting"—is written to-day in letters of fire for British labour. Will Labour awaken in time and throw off the shackles of routinism, passivity and division? The chances of a labour movement in a given period in any country are not inexhaustible; and the example of Germany, not to mention other countries, has shown that history does not wait for a labour movement which has fallen into a rut to awaken at leisure. Therefore it is to be hoped that the delegates to the Labour Party Conference will approach their labours with a sense of these larger issues, whose seriousness should still the clamours of every petty sectional faction-ridden controversy, should view these present controversies against the background of the greater events which are now developing, and should seek to find the solution of present problems with a deep consciousness, equally on the part of the representatives of every tendency and outlook, of our common responsibility before history in this decisive hour.

TWENTY years ago the Labour Party Conference met at Southport in the first flush of the rising hopes of the post-war labour movement. Where are these hopes to-day at the end of twenty years? The membership is lower than it was twenty years ago. The parliamentary representation is little more than half what it was ten years ago. Even the individual membership, which had been still rising until recently, has fallen in the past year. The most reactionary Government of modern times in this country is in power, and continues in power now for eight years. In the forthcoming general election the prospect of a Labour victory is discounted by the most sanguine as scarcely within the bounds of any reasonable possibility on the basis of existing tendencies and forces. The test of public meetings shows the vanishing of the enthusiasm of twenty years ago, with the melancholy spectacle of half-filled and quarter-filled halls—while those groupings and leaders who stand (under bans and ex-communications) for the common front of the people in the crisis of to-day cannot find halls large enough to accomodate the audiences who come to hear the message of unity.

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The by-elections show a relative stagnation, with a low level of gains for so late a stage of a Government's career, with low polls and often, as markedly as in the recent examples, with a decrease in the Government poll accompanied by a decrease in the Labour poll. This is no situation for complacency. This is no situation for opinionated self-righteousness of the section who have brought the movement to this outcome, or for the thunderbolts of expulsion and needless splits against those who strive to find a solution for these problems and to bring new enthusiasm, strength and unity to the movement. This is a situation which calls for the deepest heart-searching to find wherein the causes of failure have lain and what must be done to bring revival before it is too late.

THE Labour Party has had three chances, on a broad view, in these twenty years. The first came after the Armistice, in the years of the post-war revolutionary wave from 1919 to the spring of 1921, when capitalist society was shaken to its foundations, and the possibility of the direct conquest of power and the immediate building of socialism was within the reach of the working-class in Western and Central Europe. "We of the Labour Party," declared the old programme of 1918, "Labour and the New Social Order," "recognise in the present world catastrophe, if not the death in Europe of civilisation itself, at any rate the culmination and collapse of a distinctive industrial civilisation which the workers will not seek to reconstruct . . . . We shall do our utmost to see that it is buried with the millions whom it has done to death." That was the time of the great unrest, of the railway strike of 1919 which brought the Government to its knees, of the police strike, of soldiers' risings, of revolutionary battles in Europe, of the soviet régime in Hungary and Bavaria, of the Hands Off Russia campaign and the Councils of Action in 1920 which forced the Government to retreat and stopped a war. It ended for England with Black Friday of the Spring of 1921, when the Triple Alliance broke, *not by the strength of the Government*, but by inner disunity.

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THAT chance was never taken. During those years of confusion, of extreme weakness of capitalism, when the mass movement could have been carried forward, given the leadership, to the conquest of power, the road lay open to socialism. Had the powerful organised working-class movements of Britain, France and Germany taken that road, in unity with their Russian brothers who had led the way, we should be living in a different Europe and a different world to-day ; in place of the present problems we should be engaged only in the tasks of the construction of socialism, or rather, those tasks would have been already left long behind us, and we should be engaged in the still more fascinating issues of the transition from socialism to communism, with the limitless horizons thus opened up. That road was refused. The present problems which encompass us are only the consequence of that great refusal.

THAT road was refused, not through lack of power, but through choice. It was refused on the advice of a MacDonald and a Noske. It was refused on the grounds that a better road lay ahead for the peoples of Western and Central Europe. The example of Russia was held up as a terrible warning. The fire was turned against the revolutionary workers. In a situation of extremest tension, as in Germany, the leaders of Social Democracy armed the White officers' corps, the counter-revolutionary bands, the direct precursors of the fascist armed gangs, to shoot down the revolutionary workers and the workers' leaders. Thereby they armed the fascist gangs which were subsequently to be turned against themselves. In England the stage of social development had not reached the same degree of tension. But MacDonald and the leadership of the Labour Party led the fight throughout Europe against Bolshevism, against Marxism, and to restore capitalism. The Labour and trade union leaders worked overtime to still the unrest, to dissolve any common front through the long chain of Black Fridays and similar disruptions, to draw the workers back into the channels of capitalist normality, preaching, in place of the fight for socialism, to " increase production " as the " gate to more." Then was

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the time when the slogan of the direct fight for socialism, of "nothing but socialism" and the like, which has been suddenly discovered now by the same leadership to be so appropriate at a moment when the immediate urgent fight is the defensive fight to stem the advance of counter-revolution, would have borne a relation to realities. But then such slogans were not in favour. The slogan of the "inevitability of gradualism" was preferred. Capitalism was restored.

THE Labour Party's second chance came with the formation of the Labour Governments in the period of capitalist stabilisation. The first Labour Government was formed in 1924 and lasted for nine months. The second and main Labour Government of the post-war period was formed in 1929 and lasted until the crisis of 1931, when it was replaced by the "National" Government. The tempo was now lower. In the conditions of capitalist restoration the situation was no longer present for the immediate stormy advance of the mass movement to the working-class conquest of power and the victory of socialism. But the profound social issues of the period, the failure of post-war capitalism in England to rebuild the fabric of its vanished world hegemony, the prolonged depression which opened in the winter of 1920-21 and has never since given place to recovery of the old normal type, the consequent deepening class issues opened the way to a basic and deepening class struggle whose potentialities were shown in the general strike of 1926. The Labour Governments, even though in a parliamentary minority, could have used their strategic position to lead the assault on behalf of the social needs of the widest masses of the population against the interests of the ruling finance-capitalist oligarchy, in such a way as to mobilise the masses, win a parliamentary majority and advance to the decisive struggle for power. This possibility opened decisively with the world economic crisis which broke out in the autumn of 1929.

THIS chance also was not taken. Once again the leadership embodied in MacDonald, but expressing in fact a whole system which still rules the Labour Party, refused.

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The Labour Governments under MacDonald sought instead to accommodate their policy to the wishes of the finance-capitalist oligarchy. In 1924 they were the instruments for the imposition of the Dawes system of slavery and extortion on Germany, imposed by the Anglo-American bankers, which helped to provide the material for Hitler's propaganda. The frenzied hostility to Communism, instead of to capitalism, as the main enemy, made MacDonald the easy tool for launching the "Red Letter" fabrication, concocted in the forgery factories of the White plotters in Central Europe, transmitted through the agencies of the *Daily Mail* and shady sources in the City, but given its effective currency to be capable of stabbing Labour in the back and disrupting Labour's ranks in the critical election that followed the first Government, solely because it was issued under the authority and protection of MacDonald, who proudly pointed to it and to the sharp anti-Soviet Note based on the unchecked fabrication in order to prove that Labour was the best defender of capitalism against Communism and the Soviet Union. The stab in the back of 1924 was the foreshadowing of the stab in the back of 1931.

THE second Labour Government repeated this experience on a larger canvas. The imposition of the Young Plan replaced the imposition of the Dawes Plan and was followed by the first big election victory of Hitler. Once again the Labour Ministers swelled with pride as they received the decorations of the City in return for the stand they had made at the Hague to insist on a few million more pounds hypothetical reparations for Britain to be squeezed out of Germany. Already the world economic crisis was looming which was to sweep the whole system into the dustbin. Although the onset of the crisis had been correctly predicted by the hated Communists since 1928, the chiefs of the Labour Party, banking as ever on their confidence in capitalism, had calculated on the apparent upward swing of 1929 to issue the most fantastic promises of how they would deal with unemployment, not because they had a plan, but because they naïvely believed that the upward swing of the trade cycle would do

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their work for them. When the tornado of the world economic crisis shattered their expectations, and confronted them instead with the grim realities of inexorably mounting unemployment, they were stricken helpless and passive. There was no longer the possibility of escaping the choice between the alternatives, either to strike at the interests of finance-capital or at the interests of the working masses ; the merciless realities of the class struggle burst the illusions of class peace. The dilemma broke the Labour Government ; they could face neither the one alternative nor the other. The principal leaders passed over to the class enemy to form the " National " Government. There followed the disastrous election of 1931. The tide of Labour's second chance had passed and been lost. The long years of reaction have followed.

TO-DAY Labour's third chance, the last chance, develops in the midst of the harsh and urgent realities of the post-slump world. It is no longer a question of the buoyant hopes of an easy and rapid offensive of the first years after the war. It is no longer a question even of the moderate hopes or more limited possibilities of the Labour Governments of the twenties. It is a question of rallying the forces to organise a stand against the tide of reaction, in order to pave the way for future advance. We are living in the midst of the world after the great economic crisis, from which there has been no normal recovery and which already slides into new crisis ; in the world of a hundred-fold sharpened and intensified social and international antagonisms ; in the world of fascism as the main driving force of modern capitalism, of Hitler, of reaction, of the " National " Government, of the destruction of whole labour movements, of advancing war. The old opportunities, the old possibilities no longer exist in the same form. Routinism, which sees only the past, which looks only for the repetition of the past, is doomed to death. But new opportunities and new responsibilities arise from this same situation, which, if only there is awakening and response, can open the way to even greater hopes and real achievement for the future.

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THE problems and difficulties, the defeats and reverses of the present period are the inexorable outcome of past policies and errors, the bitter fruits of the accursed inheritance of reformism, as much as the parallel triumphs and achievements of the Soviet workers are the outcome of a correct policy and correct party leadership. But this outcome of the advance of reaction in the capitalist world produces also its counter-forces. The dialectical process of history is not a one-way progression. The same advance of reaction, the laying bare of the brutal face of fascist dictatorship and of advancing predatory war, awakens at the same time masses who were lulled before by the old reformist illusions, awakens the masses of the working class who have followed social democratic leadership, awakens to political life and activity vast sections of the population who never before questioned the existing régime, awakens whole nations to the struggle for freedom. While the enemy assembles his legions for the assault, the possibility arises for us to mobilise a broader front than ever before in history for the advance of our struggle, which can only end in final victory over capitalism. But for this to be realised, it is essential to realise the international unity of the working class, it is essential to realise the unity of the working class and democratic forces. It is here that arises the primary responsibility of British Labour, alike to build international working-class unity and to build the common front of the British people against the citadel of reaction, the "National" Government. It is here that arises Labour's third chance, its greatest chance, but also its last chance in the present historical period—to lead the united forces of the British people against reaction, and so to create the conditions for new advance. If this chance is not taken, then the possibilities within the existing situation and relation of forces would be exhausted as much as they were at a corresponding, though different, stage for German Social Democracy. The game would be played out. The cup would be drunk to the dregs. But it is not yet too late.

IT is difficult to argue for the obvious. Future historians will not find it easy to explain why the British Labour

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Movement, in the face of the warning example of country after country of Europe, should so tenaciously and obstinately resist the one path of salvation, not only for the future of democracy or of peace in the world, but for its own continued existence. It is indeed an amazing political situation in Britain to-day. An extreme reactionary Government, which acts with brazen openness on behalf of big business interests and the most reckless profiteering, which scarcely conceals its contempt and hostility towards democracy and democratic forms, which acts in direct collaboration with Fascism abroad, breaking down one defence of peace after another, facilitating the advance of war and bringing the people into direct danger, which is as discredited in the disastrous outcome of this policy as its representatives are personally unpopular, yet remains in power year after year, and prepares to face a third general election with every prospect of a renewed victory, unless a speedy change takes place in the disposition of political forces.

DOES it, then, represent the outlook and sentiments of the mass of the people? Not in the least. It is only necessary to examine the types, the antecedents, the whole outlook and environment of the members of the Ministry—anti-popular, exclusive, plutocratic and pro-fascist to the core—to see the complete gulf that exists between them and the mass of the people. As well treat Von Papen's Herrenklub as an expression of German democracy. The outlook of the majority of the British people is democratic, with a strong labour and socialist core. It is definitely and even fiercely anti-fascist. For a variety of reasons it is bitterly opposed, with a unanimity almost complete save for a small corrupt section on top, to Hitler and Mussolini. Every testing has shown a decisive majority for collective peace. The very appeals of the Government, which, whenever it wants to make a popular appeal, seeks to conceal its real policy and build on the basis of an appeal to democratic, anti-fascist sentiment and the aim of collective security, betray its consciousness of the real outlook of the people. Yet the Government, whose entire policy moves in the opposite direction,

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remains unchanged. Despite successive storms, the majority remains unorganised to give effect to its will.

WHY? The answer cannot be escaped. It is equally recognised by every dispassionate political observer, including by observers from within the Government camp. The answer lies in the present policy of the Labour Party, which refuses to permit unity of the opposition, refuses to permit either unity of the working-class forces or the no less essential wider unity of all the working class and democratic forces to defeat the Government. So results the situation described in the unkind, but shrewd observation of the City organ, the *Economist :*

> The paradox of the present political situation in this country is that it is not Mr. Chamberlain, but Mr. Attlee who is at this moment exerting himself to prevent the formation of an opposition that might have a chance of turning the present Government out. So long as this situation remains unchanged, the Labour Party's fulminations against Mr. Chamberlain will remain unconvincing.
>
> In Spain they used to practise a " rotavism " by which two nominally contending political parties took office and resigned it, turn and turn about, on an agreed time-table. Mr. Attlee's tacit understanding with Mr. Chamberlain is still more quaint. He will see to it that Mr. Chamberlain and his friends shall be His Majesty's eternal Government so long as Mr. Attlee and his friends can be sure of being His Majesty's eternal Opposition (*Economist*, March 4, 1939).

" It might be possible to defeat the Government," admitted the *Daily Herald* on January 12, " by a policy of pure aggression." But such an outcome would not be acceptable, since " it would be dangerous to be swung into office merely by the force of irritation and discontent."

IT is known that in the event of an emergency of war Labour's leaders would be prepared to enter into a coalition with Chamberlain, and that such an eventuality has been discussed. But in the present emergency, when there is still the possibility to prevent war by defeating Chamberlain and his disastrous policy, they are not prepared to enter into a combination with the opposition forces—not with the

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ruling big capitalist forces represented by Chamberlain, but with the popular opposition forces—in order to defeat Chamberlain and save democracy and peace. If a separatist victory is impossible, if victory over Chamberlain can be secured only at the price of working-class unity and democratic unity, then it is preferred that Chamberlain should continue to rule, that is, that fascism should conquer. This is the extraordinary position reached. So develops the tacit alliance between the " National " Government and the ruling Labour group, which is the heart of the present political situation and the real present system of government in this country. The " National " Government holds power, not by its own strength, but by the tacit support and consent of the Labour Party, which, while it expresses occasional very limited verbal criticism of the policy pursued, negates that verbal criticism by its practical action, since its practical rôle is to paralyse the opposition by preventing its unity.

IS it too much to speak of an " alliance " between the reactionary " National " Government and the ruling Labour group ? But every crisis of these recent years has proved it in action again and again. It was shown in 1935 with the Labour acclamation of the " National " Government, of Baldwin and Hoare as national heroes over the collective security imposture, and the consequent deliberate throwing away of the general election to Labour's enemies. It was shown in 1936 with the support of the Government's policy of " Non-Intervention " in Spain, that is, with the support of the infamous arms blockade to strangle Spanish Democracy. It was shown in 1937 with the support of the Government's rearmament irrespective of the use of that rearmament to strengthen the Government's hands on the side of fascism. It was shown in the Spring of 1938 in the March crisis after the resignation of Eden and the annexation of Austria, when the refusal of the Peace Alliance and the General Council's meeting with Chamberlain saved Chamberlain. It was shown in the Autumn of 1938 with the acclamation of Chamberlain's flight to Munich. It is shown again to-day in the acclamation of the Government's " new

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policy," which is declared in Labour expression to be a policy of the " peace front " and " collective security," when in reality it is nothing of the kind, is rejecting and sabotaging the peace front and continuing the old policy in new and still more dangerous forms. In this way the ground is being prepared by the Labour Party leadership for the general election this year to ensure a new Government victory in the style of 1935.

THIS alliance, which has shown itself in action again and again in every crisis of these recent years, not only bears the direct responsibility for the disasters consequent on the continuance of Chamberlain's policy during these years, the sacrifice of other peoples and the increasing dangers to the people of this country. It also strikes directly at the root of democratic institutions in this country. The veiled coalition of the two Front Benches defeats the possibility of expression of the will of the people, robs elections of their reality and creates a situation in which, even if a majority opposition vote were to be recorded against the Chamberlain Government in the general election, its continuance in office would be guaranteed. The resulting situation of political deadlock creates a sense of helplessness and paralysis of the popular will, and bears its harvest in the growth of apathy in relation to the existing political machinery, the heavily falling electoral vote, the discrediting of democratic forms and the weakening and discrediting of the Labour Party itself. Thus the very policy which is formally defended as the attempted monopolist sectional strengthening of the Labour Party at the expense of all other opposition forces ends in the weakening also of the Labour Party. It is disastrous not only in its direct results of the strengthening of the Chamberlain Government, with the consequent blows to democracy and peace throughout the world and the strengthening of reaction at home. Its indirect results are no less disastrous in undermining the basis of democracy and promoting the conditions which facilitate the advance to fascism. The fatal policy of German Social Democracy is here reproduced in an even more menacing form.

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WHAT is the reason for this deadly policy, which can only be regarded as suicidal even from the narrowest standpoint of the interests of the Labour Party, quite apart from its effect on wider issues of life and death concern to the people. It might seem on the face of it to be madness, and to be explicable only in terms of the proverbial madness which the gods visit on those whom they have doomed. So, too, the policy of Chamberlain might appear to be madness to the old-fashioned bourgeois imperialist observer, who sees that that policy has deliberately gone out of its way to build up from nothing, arm, strengthen and strategically equip those very fascist Powers which to-day openly threaten the British Empire. Yet there is method in the madness ; and the method in both cases is deeply similar. For Chamberlain the main enemy is even yet, not fascism, but Communism, the working class, socialism, the Soviet Union. He would rather bring his Empire to the very edge of danger than risk the, to him, greater evil of a democratic peace front in unity with the Socialist Soviet Union which would mean the end of all the aggressive hopes of reaction and the inner collapse of fascism. For the blindly embittered, partisan, sectionalist ruling group of Labour's leadership, despite all the differences of conditions, the same principle holds true in their own sphere ; and the community of hatreds underlies the co-operation. For them the main enemy is, not fascism, but Communism, working-class unity, the class struggle. Rather than admit this, rather than co-operate with Communism, they would see the whole working-class movement go down to destruction, as German Social Democracy in the like case equally chose, the rump of whose leadership now in exile still grimly opposes unity.

BUT there is a second reason which combines with the first, and which also closely parallels the old policy of German Social Democracy. That reason is the still continuing trust in Chamberlain as, despite all drawbacks, the strongest protector of democracy and eventual champion against Hitler (" the best man for the job," in the revealing words of an indiscreet Labour M.P.), that is, the still continuing trust

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in the essential benevolence of the British ruling class to maintain as indispensable the hierarchy of the labour movement and not pass to open fascism or alliance with fascism. Chamberlain may be criticised for his "blunders," "weakness," "vacillations," in alternation with congratulations and wishes of godspeed each time he proclaims a new turn of policy ; he is never attacked as the direct leader of aggressive reaction against the working class and the conscious collaborator with fascism. Here also is reproduced the attitude of German Social Democracy to Hindenburg. German Social Democracy, refusing the united working-class front, saw in Hindenburg, the representative of German Big Capital, the best protector of German democracy against fascism ; and for that reason in the presidential election of 1932 they called on the German people to vote for Hindenburg against Hitler. The majority of the German people elected Hindenburg and defeated Hitler ; and within eight months Hindenburg placed Hitler in power without the authority of parliament. The trust in Chamberlain will no less yield bitter disillusionment.

THIS attitude was sharply illustrated in the fight over conscription. Chamberlain's introduction of conscription, by which he falsely sought to present himself as the promoter of democratic defence against fascism, was by no means designed in his intention to strengthen the military front against fascism (for his whole accompanying policy contradicted any such aim), but was designed in pursuance of his still continuing reactionary and essentially pro-fascist policy to strengthen his hands against the working class and democratic forces in Britain so as to facilitate the continuance of his pro-fascist policy. It is manifest that conscription is in itself a weapon whose character, as with every weapon, depends on the character of the Government that wields it. The fight against conscription under Chamberlain was therefore necessarily a fight against the policy of Chamberlain. Yet just this ground was in fact avoided by the Labour Party leadership, which was simultaneously handing out testimonials to Chamberlain's conversion to collective

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security and the peace front. Instead, the Labour arguments either lauded the " voluntary " system, that is, the long-term professional army, as a democratic system, when in fact it has been the chosen system of British reaction as the most reliable weapon against the working class and against the colonial peoples ; or presented the conception of the peace front as one in which, in the event of a conflict, the British contribution would be confined to the navy, finance and munitions, while the peoples of France and the Soviet Union would have to face the brunt of the fighting—that is, the proverbial imperialist method of the British ruling class in the past, to use other peoples for Britain's wars. Such arguments could only strengthen the position of Chamberlain in his false pose as the promoter of democratic defence against fascism.

THE Southport Conference has now the responsibility to meet and face this situation. What can be done ? It is quite true that no immediate dramatic results can be expected from the Southport Conference. The lines are at present harshly drawn ; and it will need a heavier impact of events, and above all a still more widespread awakening of the entire membership, to yield a basic change. But that this basic change must come, if the whole movement is not to go down, is certain ; and its speedy realisation must be the concern of every serious socialist and member of the Labour movement. The most serious character of the present situation is the sense of hopelessness which has descended on many earnest Labour members, the sense of impotence before an implacable machine whose policy is regarded as unchangeable, and which appears to grind out its vetoes and prohibitions in utter unconcern of the desperate needs of the present position. *But this surrender to hopelessness is already a part of the disease. Just here the chain requires to be broken.* The myth of fascist " invincibility " is the strongest weapon in its armoury to hypnotise the overwhelmingly superior numbers of the democratic peoples and of the nations menaced by fascism into panic and surrender. So, too, with the situation in the Labour movement. The myth

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of impotence produces impotence. Confidence begets confidence. Nothing has yet been attempted compared to what must now be attempted and done. The power is in our hands if we use it. The real opponents of unity are a handful. There are millions on our side, if we reach them, if we spread the awakening and organisation that the times require. "We are many, they are few."

THE tasks that are now needed are simple with a terrible simplicity. The healing of all the divisions that are senseless and meaningless in the face of fascism and of the present rule of reaction in Britain on the side of fascism: the concentration of every effort to defeat the Government of reaction; the winning of every ally that can be won for this fight; the mass unity in the struggle that can enforce a policy for democracy and for peace—is it possible that these simple aims cannot commend themselves to the millions in the trade unions and in the Labour movement, and far beyond? Meanwhile, Southport can already do something, can take a first step. The ground may not yet be prepared for that policy which must eventually be reached—urgent as is the need that it should be reached already. But even if on this there is still not agreement, the delegates to Southport can yet find the way to reinstatement of those who have been expelled for the offence of advocating unity, and can lay down the conditions of disciplined loyalty to decisions in action, combined with the right of advocacy of policies which are felt vital for the future of the movement, and which, though they may only have the vote of a minority to-day, may well become the viewpoint of the majority to-morrow. This would already be a gesture, a first step to closing the ranks, to restoring health to the movement through the possibility of free growth and development, a first step to give the beginning of new hope.

WE would conclude with a short parable of our times for those leaders who still oppose unity. In October, 1935, the Executive Committee of the Labour and Socialist International met to consider the urgent proposition of the

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Communist International for a common front of the international working class to check the war that fascism was then already unloosing on the world. Five parties voted against, and compelled all the remainder to bow to their will ; the British, the Dutch, the Danish, the Swedish and the Czechoslovak Social Democracy. The leaders of Czechoslovak Social Democracy, Stivin, Soukup and Schaefer, voted against unity and a common front to check the war offensive, which had then " only " reached Abyssinia. To-day Czechoslovak Social Democracy has shared the fate of Abyssinia. Why must it always be necessary to destroy a labour movement and to destroy a people in order to learn the lesson of unity ? Why not learn it before ?

R. P. D.

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A Personal Appeal to Labour Party Conference Delegates

BY TOM MANN

THE LABOUR PARTY Conference is meeting at a time when the many questions calling for consideration and decision are truly important and vital, and need to be approached with courage and discernment. Delegates require not only a knowledge of the social, political and industrial difficulties that abound and an honest determination to face up to them, but also an understanding as to the lines of policy and tactics to pursue to make true progress realisable.

My only warranty for venturing to express opinions upon the present situation is that all through a rather long life I have participated in these matters with an honest desire to contribute my quota in the broadest and best sense to the advancement of Labour's cause, and through all the years I have not known quite so critical a time as now.

Long ago I saw that, whether the workers were seeking to achieve their ends by political or industrial methods, the essential condition to attain success was *solidarity*. I recall numerous occasions when the appeal for solidarity was responded to right loyally and always with splendid results, and I believe that I can size up the situation now with the complexities confronting the workers owing to the growth of fascism and all the antagonisms for which it is responsible. With a fair knowledge of past events, I am confident that the workers can successfully cope with their powerful antagonists in this country and internationally, if only we can show solidarity—that is, of course, *Unity*.

We have to face up to continued ownership of the means of life and systematic wholesale robbery by the plutocracy, or collective ownership by the whole people and a planned production of all necessaries with the wiping out of all unemployment and of poverty. To travel as rapidly as possible towards this is the simple but imperative demand of every honest person.

Let us not at this hour weaken ourselves by unnecessary divisions or policies of disruption. Having urged the toilers to unite in unions and political organisations, shall we not now, when matters are so vital, find the way, despite differences of viewpoint, to maintain a broad common front against the common enemy?

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The forces of Labour have enormous work to do, but it can be done if unity amongst these forces exists. Comrades, I am unwilling to contribute one item that will hinder, but I do wish to urge that a broader view be taken so that there shall be room for all in the Labour Movement, who by their life's work show that they are truly with Labour. This is the case unquestionably with men like Sir Stafford Cripps, William Gallacher, Harry Pollitt and Comrade Strauss.

I have lived my life and am entirely free from any personal desire in this matter, but if by a lack of unity at this stage we allow fascism to advance and domination by an exploiting plutocracy to continue, that indeed will be truly awful.

Comrades all, sincerely do I wish you well, and truly do I wish the movement well. The rank and file are willing and ready to go the right way at the right pace. Help them now so to do in this hour of need.

Have you seen the

NEW

"DAILY WORKER"?

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The Supreme Issue at Southport

BY ARTHUR HORNER

EVERY SERIOUS MEMBER of the Labour Party will agree that the Party conference at Southport this Whitsun faces public issues, and a Party situation, of the utmost gravity. The eighteen months that have passed since the last regular annual conference of the Party, at Bournemouth in October, 1937, have marked a whole epoch in the home and international situations. Shattering events have succeeded each other at such a speed that many in our movement, and among the general public, are somewhat dazed. We have seen Austria, Czechoslovakia, Spain, Albania, Memel thrust violently under the yoke of Fascism as a direct result of the Chamberlain Government's policy of " appeasing " the Dictators at the expense of international law and order. The law of nations in Europe to-day has become the law of the jungle. Aggression by the Axis gangsters now threatens everyone. Catastrophe lies at our very doors. Not just " will there be war ? " but " *when* will the war begin ? " becomes the dangerously fatalistic question on the lips of millions.

These current problems are in the front of all our minds ; but I doubt whether, on the eve of the Southport conference, many of us will think back to the outstanding features of that preceding Labour Party conference, just eighteen months ago, when the disasters of 1938-39 for the working class, democracy and peace were still in the womb of the future. The effort of memory is worth while, nevertheless, if we are correctly to understand the task that will confront the delegates at Southport this Whitsun.

The Bournemouth conference was notable for three things—(1) support of rearmament, (2) rejection of unity, (3) reform of Executive elections, giving constituency parties direct representation and resulting in the return to the Party's governing body of three leading supporters of unity in the persons of Sir Stafford Cripps, Mr. D. N. Pritt and Professor Laski. Point (1) summed up the negative, reactionary tendency at the conference, point (3) its positive, progressive potentiality. Unity was actually never discussed as a straight issue ; it was voted down almost automatically by endorsement of the Executive's report.

Bournemouth certainly signalised the advance of certain new forces in the Labour Party, of which more will be said below ; yet as we look back I think we must admit frankly that the most decisive result of the

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conference was in fact its signalising of a " national unity " which enabled Chamberlain to go right ahead with the sinister policy of " appeasement." Recollect the Bournemouth debate on rearmament, which took place on the National Council of Labour's statement on " International Policy and Defence." That statement certainly declared itself in favour of collective security and criticised the Government's foreign policy ; but in adding a recognition of the need for immediate rearmament against Fascism there lay a fatal error which became only too clear in the interpretations offered in official speeches. For what was made obvious was that in the view of the Labour Party leadership rearmament could be separated from policy.

" Rearmament," Sir Walter Citrine had told the Trades Union Congress in that year (1937), " cannot await the advent of a Labour Government." Sir Walter (and neither he nor any other Transport House personalities will dispute that here he spoke the mind of all of them) appeared to be satisfied because " Mr. Eden has repeatedly declared that the commitments of this country are in respect of collective security." Four months later Mr. Eden and collective security were unceremoniously dumped at the behest of the Dictators and the " appeasers " took the road that led to Munich.

At Bournemouth James Walker, of the Iron and Steel Trades, was the Executive's spokesman, delivering " the first big Labour conference speech for a generation that has struck the patriotic note " (*Manchester Guardian*). Walker's thoroughly jingo speech carried the divorce between rearmament and Government policy to the limit. His main appeal was that " all feel very much safer with an armed Britain because Britain, as the mother of democracies, has always stood for democratic liberty." No wonder that Chamberlain, simultaneously addressing the Conservative Party conference, warmly greeted the Bournemouth speeches and decisions on rearmament, declaring that " we very heartily welcome this belated conversion to the true faith."

The arch-appeaser knew what Bournemouth meant all right. With Labour support for his rearmament—that was the " national unity " he wanted—he could go ahead and complete his deal with Mussolini in the shape of the Anglo-Italian agreement and use the strength of " armed Britain " *not* to defend the democratic liberty of the Czechs, but to force them at all costs to the surrender which led to the entire extinction both of their democratic liberty and their national independence. I wonder how Sir Walter Citrine would justify, in the summer of 1939, his rhetorical question to critics in the autumn of 1937—" do they really believe that the British Government would dare to pledge the forces of this country behind the Fascist Powers ? " We have had Minorca as well as Munich !

I contend that if we resolutely face the facts about our chief enemy, Chamberlain, we must conclude that it was no accident that Bournemouth's acceptance of rearmament preluded the disasters of the past

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year. Every further commitment to what was well called in these pages last month the "tacit alliance" between our Labour leadership and this Government cannot but lead to increasing disaster. And that, in my considered view, is the key to Southport as it was the key to Bournemouth. There is the heart of the problem that faces us. Unless we can get down to this and resolve it in the right way then the outlook is desperate.

Does experience not show us that to have any sort of confidence or trust in the "National" Government, and above all in its present chief and his principal lieutenants, is to doom ourselves to inevitable defeat? Have we forgotten 1935? The Government then loudly declared its eternal attachment to collective security. It secured the unconditional endorsement of the Labour Party leadership (who did not appreciate the commonsense case advanced by the Communist Party, namely to fight for the policy of collective security, but to distrust the Government every inch of the way and lose no chance to expose its real intentions). And so, well plastered with Labour testimonials, the Government won a big election victory. Let us not forget that this was later admitted by the leader of the Party himself, Mr. Attlee, who said at Edinburgh in October, 1936: "The Government used our declaration in order to win the General Election. Then they betrayed us."

Are we to let ourselves be "betrayed" again? We undoubtedly will be if the Party leadership continues to function as a sort of critical associate of the Chamberlain Government, alternately hopeful and disillusioned, instead of an out-and-out uncompromising opponent. Indeed that very use of the term "betrayed" suggests the reality of the tacit alliance to which I have referred. Does one complain about being betrayed by an enemy? Surely it is only a faithless friend who betrays. And we have to stop regarding Chamberlain as a faithless friend; he is our ruthless, and skilful, foe.

Mr. Attlee is not alone in his attitude. It is general. As I write Mr. John Marchbank of the railwaymen, one of our outstanding right-wingers, has declared, in the course of a strong attack on the introduction of conscription, that "consideration must be given to the future *relations of Labour with the Government. We have trusted it too far and too much. Treachery and betrayal has been our reward*," adding that things can no longer be dealt with in "the *atmosphere of confidence and goodwill which enveloped the earlier discussions.*" (*Railway Review*, May 12, 1939. My italics.)

Yes, Mr. Marchbank and his colleagues have certainly "trusted" Chamberlain "too far and too much." They have, in short, trusted Chamberlain. They have been rewarded with "treachery"; or, as I should have said, they have got what anyone misguided enough to repose confidence in an enemy is bound to get. Curiously enough Mr. Marchbank was talking about "treachery" even during those

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" earlier discussions " with Chamberlain, when there was such an " atmosphere of confidence and goodwill." But he was not referring to the Government. It was in the *Railway Review* last January, and he was attacking the " treachery or sheer imbecility " of Sir Stafford Cripps' policy of uniting all democratic forces under Labour Party leadership to oust Chamberlain. " We must preserve our political organisation," he then wrote, " from the creeping paralysis that would result from its inoculation with the Cripps' germ of defeatism." When we take Mr. Marchbank in January and Mr. Marchbank in May we are bound to admit that the comparison is suggestive. It is those who admit that their policy has led to " treachery and betrayal " who have paralysed the movement ; those who confess that they have " trusted " the Government " too far and too much," instead of uniting to fight it, who merit the label of defeatists.

The leadership of which Mr. Marchbank is such an eminent representative has up to now been discussing questions like National Service and the mobility of labour in wartime with the Government in an " atmosphere of confidence and goodwill." They have been " betrayed " by the sudden though hardly unexpected introduction of conscription while, as Mr. Marchbank truly says, " the days pass away without any strengthening of the ' Peace Front ' which the Government pretends to be actively engaged in creating." I submit that, if it had not been for that earlier " confidence," Chamberlain would not have been able to jump conscription on the country, or to sabotage the firm peace front with the Soviet Union. The point now is, however, whether we are going to learn from the past in order to act aright in the present. If the Labour Party decides to banish the word " confidence " from its vocabulary so far as the Chamberlain Government is concerned, then it will be possible to enforce the forging of the Anglo-Franco-Soviet peace front.

The making of this turn to real opposition is the supreme issue at Southport. But that naturally implies a reconsideration of the whole Cripps position. It is well known that the Party Executive in March only decided to take further disciplinary action against certain of Cripps' supporters (incidentally neatly removing from the field potential nominees for the new Executive) by 13 votes to 11. Sir Stafford himself then offered to seek some sort of accommodation with the Party leadership given the conduct of stronger opposition to the Government. What possible basis or excuse can there be for maintaining the expulsions and heresy-hunting ?

More ; if the policy of " confidence " is dead and ready for burial, what policy of opposition can succeed if it is not a policy of united opposition ? Certainly there can be no question, whatever may be the arguments for or against this or that form of the Popular Front, that the Labour Party itself should be united, should end instantly the ban on those who, like Cripps, count as its ablest and unquestionably most

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popular leaders. On that, the essential complement to the ending of the " confidence " policy, Southport should speak with no uncertain voice.

I will not recall here the story of the Cripps campaign. But of its capacity to rally large masses to the banner of determined opposition to the Government, of its striking success in recruiting thousands of new members for the Labour Party (new fighters that only hidebound and crazy prejudice could look askance at, as Transport House has sought to do), of the new hope and inspiration that it has brought all over the country, no impartial observer remains in doubt. Are forces like this, to which Bournemouth for the first time gave a voice on the Party Executive, to remain shut out and so impoverish and petrify the Party ? Are the best elements in the Party rank-and-file to be abandoned to frustration and despair ?

The state of feeling in the Party on these matters has already been illustrated in the preliminary agenda for Southport. Of 20 resolutions on the expulsion of Cripps, after all, only two support the Executive ; the minimum demand, that the conference hear him, can only be denied by flouting the most elementary principles of Party democracy—the constituency parties have the right, in all justice and equity, to hear in his own defence the man they elected to the Executive at Bournemouth. Of 25 resolutions on the Popular Front, too, only half-a-dozen support the Executive.

Conscription and the Peace Front with the U.S.S.R. will be dominant issues, of course ; and among other matters of the first importance already on the agenda one must note A.R.P. (the demand for deep shelters is voiced by the Socialist Medical Association and other bodies), and questions like unemployment, the distressed areas, housing and rents. All are vital in the fight of a real opposition to the Chamberlain Government. All are mere pious resolutions if that genuine, determined opposition is not to be forthwith forged.

Southport faces the gravest responsibility of any Labour Party conference in our time. We know that some big unions, though their leadership has conducted no effective consultation with their members, may cast their solid block votes for reaction. But not all. And the constituency party delegates can do much. Their campaigning and their influence won enough support to secure an important Party reform at Bournemouth ; may they at Southport so fight that they secure the adoption of that positive, clear-cut, united opposition policy which alone, by making the organised working class the leader of the whole British people, can save peace and save democracy.

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Conscription and Democracy

BY WILLIAM RUST

THE INTRODUCTION OF conscription has thrust the question of democracy, and in particular, the democratisation of the armed forces into the centre of political discussion. It cannot be avoided. Answering criticisms Government spokesmen claim that conscription is in itself democratic because rich and poor alike have to render service to the state. In the debate on the Military Training Bill Hore-Belisha even had the effrontery to ask " how more speedily could you advance democratisation (of the Army) than by passing a measure such as this? "

The Labour Party, on the other hand, has taken up the position that conscription is in itself undemocratic and that the voluntary system is representative of the traditions of the country and should therefore not be abandoned. This line of argument has led to a great deal of confusion in the movement.

The statement entitled " Labour and Defence " which will be submitted to the Southport Conference of the Labour Party is in fact an indictment of the voluntary army as undemocratic and an attack on its class character. " Britain has built up the Empire with forces raised ' on the cheap ' " it declares, " officers, younger sons of wealthy families, who could maintain themselves only by supplementing their pay with private means ; men, poorly paid, who could find no opening for themselves in civil life." The language is restrained but the meaning is clear.

" Labour and Defence " demands promotion from the ranks and states that " a Labour Government would cast the widest possible net for recruits to the commissioned ranks. The Services would no longer rely upon drafts from wealthy families or from officers' families, passing through a small number of schools."

In face of this official Labour document it is a little difficult to understand how Labour Members of Parliament can deliver speeches extolling the virtues of the voluntary system and declaring their devotion to it.

The question of democracy in relation to the armed forces must be examined from two angles. Firstly, from the standpoint of the policy of the government which controls the armed forces, and secondly, from the character of the democratic forms within the forces themselves. If the government is pursuing a fascist or pro-fascist policy, then the armed forces, whether voluntary or conscripted, can on no

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account be said to be playing a democratic rôle. Further, conscripted forces in which freedom of political expression is permitted and promotion judged by merit and not by class can be described as democratic whereas voluntary, professional forces based on class domination and segregated from the people are certainly most undemocratic.

The Republican Army of Spain was conscripted but it was decidedly democratic. In Britain neither the voluntary forces nor the new conscripted forces are democratic. The conscript army will necessarily bear the impress of the system which prevails in the voluntary army, it will be officered and controlled by "brass-hats," by the military caste of the British bourgeoisie. It will be utilised by Chamberlain in the service of a policy which is strengthening Fascism abroad and encouraging the growth of Fascism at home.

It is therefore clear that the working-class movement cannot oppose conscription on the basis of abstract principle. Putting on one side the example of the Soviet Union where universal military training is also a form of political education in the service of the Socialist State, there is the example of Spain where the advanced workers campaigned for the introduction of conscription on the basis of a democratic army system, in order that the Republic would be able to defend itself against Fascism. We must face the conscription question by examining the necessities of the situation and the policy of the government in power. But in those cases where conscription is necessary we must always fight at the same time for democracy within the armed forces.

The conscription measure of the Chamberlain Government must be opposed on the grounds that the ruling imperialist clique intend to use conscription not in order to fight Fascism but in order to help it and to attack the rights and liberties of the British people. Under a government that we could trust we would be prepared to support conscription because far from impairing democracy it could be made the means of protecting our liberties from Fascist aggression and changing the army system in Britain in the direction of democratisation.

The general attitude of the National Government towards democratic practices in Britain is sufficient justification for the belief that it intends to utilise conscription for undemocratic purposes. The statute book is now littered with acts (The Incitement to Disaffection Act and The Public Order Act are the most recent additions) which curtail popular liberties, and there is increasing evidence of official censorship and drastic police interference with the rights of the citizen. Despite the demands of public opinion A.R.P. is far from democratic and there is evidence to show that it will be used as a cover for dictatorial measures.

During recent years a great deal of public feeling has been aroused by such things as the dockyard dismissals, the Harworth case, the Trenchard ban, the unrestrained anti-Semitism of the Fascists, the

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film censorship, etc. As far back as July, 1936, Mr. D. N. Pritt drew attention, in a striking parliamentary speech, to the fact that " police action in recent times has been steadily crushing the ordinary freedom of expression of political views," and he added, with justification, that " working-class opinion about the police is completely unprintable." Since then there have been a hundred and one incidents to justify these conclusions.

Harworth, for example, was not only an example of heavy court sentences but also of actions on the part of the police which aroused a very deep resentment. Mr. Ronald Kidd, the Secretary of the National Council for Civil Liberties, stated at the time that " the police have adopted a threatening attitude to persons who are not in any way disorderly, and it is widely believed that this threatening attitude is an attempt to interfere with the right of assembly and to render it difficult for peaceful picketing to be carried out." In respect of film censorship it is worth while recalling the fact that during the September crisis the Government took steps to suppress the Paramount's interviews with Wickham Steed and A. J. Cummings on the grounds, to use the words of Sir John Simon, that " His Majesty's Government considered that certain passages in the news reel referred to, which was being shown at the time of the Prime Minister's conversations with Herr Hitler at Godesberg, might have a prejudicial effect upon negotiations."

In connection with its plans for civil defence the Government has already appointed twelve regional commissioners whose powers are so extensive that they are already colloquially known as the " twelve dictators." The intention that these commissioners should supersede the local authorities was clearly revealed by Sir John Anderson when he stated in Parliament on March 2 that " elected local bodies as they function in peace time may not constitute the most effective type of organisation that could be imagined for war conditions." There is reason to believe that the Cabinet has already worked out plans for placing all ministers, with the exception of the war departments, under the control of a Chief of Civil Defence, whose regional commissioners would in turn take over the power of the local authorities. Also, the commissioners are not unaware of the powers they have to assume in a state of emergency arising from what is officially described as " a breakdown of communications " and privately referred to by Government officials as " a state of civil unrest." At present these are only projected war-time plans, but in the hands of the Government they could be used for the imposition of dictatorial measures against the working class in peace-time as well. Moreover, the commissioners have been chosen with the extreme care and the possession of an old school tie appears to be an essential qualification.

These aspects of democracy in Britain are of great importance and it would be well to pay much more attention to them but the question

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of trade union and factory organisation is of even greater importance because both the living standards and the vital future interests of the working class are bound up with the preservation of the rights of the trade unions, factory committees and shop stewards. In modern times military conscription has its counterpart in industrial conscription and the National Government has already worked out elaborate plans in this respect.

During recent weeks the General Council of the Trades Union Congress has been in constant negotiation with the Minister of Labour on the conditions of labour during war time and an agreement may shortly be reached. It is not to be expected that the General Council will sign away the right to strike at this early stage but this is the issue ultimately involved and this is what the union leaders did during the last war when they entered into the Treasury Agreement which stipulated that :

> During the war period there shall in no case be any stoppage of work upon munitions and equipments of war or other work required for a satisfactory completion of the war.

The Government undoubtedly intends to go much further than the Treasury Agreement of the last war ; it has worked out much more than a list of reserved occupations, plans for dilution and compulsory arbitration. The real issue at stake is the conscription of labour and the militarisation of the factories. The General Council understands this quite as well as any left wing rank and filer, but it blankly refuses to face the real issue. The negotiations are described as covering " a comprehensive scheme of machinery for industry " and the securing of assurances regarding the " regulation of prices and profits."

The actual facts need to be plainly stated to the movement otherwise there exists the danger that the unions will find themselves not only paralysed during war time but also with their functions seriously undermined during peace. If we had in Britain a government that we could trust, a government that was seriously engaged in the defence of the country against Fascism the trade unions would, of course, fully co-operate with that government in the carrying through of an armament programme necessary to stop the aggressors. The trade unions would also expect and obtain safeguards regarding the rights of the workers, assurances on wages and measures to limit profits.

But it does not seem to have occurred to the General Council that the first consideration in the negotiations is the character of the government they are dealing with. The General Council has simply passed over the necessity of organising a united struggle of the workers for the defeat of the " National " Government, it ignores the anti-democratic, pro-fascist tendencies of the Chamberlain clique and pretends that the negotiations are purely practical in character, having little or no connection with politics.

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In entering into negotiations with the Government the General Council should have openly declared its opposition to the Government's policy and warned the workers of the necessity of defending their unions against the attacks which the ruling class is preparing. It has done nothing of the kind, although the Government will undoubtedly utilise any projected war-time agreement in order to work changes in that direction during time of peace.

We emphasise this latter view because the General Council, with seeming innocence, puts forward the view that the present negotiations represent a great advance on 1914 when discussions took place only as the circumstances arose. If the General Council wishes to be commended on its sagacity in having committed the Labour movement to a policy before the next war breaks out it is entitled to all the bouquets that are forthcoming—but they will only come from the employers and the Government. Our concern is more with the present situation because the next war is not inevitable as the General Council seems to assume and it still lies within the power of the labour and democratic forces of this country to unite their forces for the defeat of Chamberlain and the establishment of a Peace Front that will hold Fascism in check. The fight for the Peace Front still remains the vital issue before the trade union movement.

Moreover, trade unionists should remember that the attack on conditions and trade union rights has begun already and that it will be pursued with far greater alacrity if the unions endorse war-time agreements containing the kind of crippling conditions that the big employers have always desired with all their hearts during peace time.

There remains one other point to which attention should be drawn, namely, that in the event of war the trade unions will undoubtedly receive the attentions of the regional commissioners. The Ministry of Labour appears to have made this clear already to the General Council when he explained what he was pleased to call the " principle of decentralisation " to be operated by the commissioners in the event of a " breakdown in communications." (This sinister phrase is appearing with increasing frequency in official documents.) We are entitled to assume from this reference that the Cabinet has in mind the establishment of a dictatorial control over the unions during war time if not their actual suppression and that these are the realities behind the so-called practical and amicable negotiations in which the General Council is now engaged.

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Armaments, The Budget and Unemployment

BY JOHN KNIGHT

[*This is the second of two articles on the present economic situation. The first article appeared in the* LABOUR MONTHLY, *May*, 1939.]

THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT of the last eighteen months is characterised on the one hand by the slowing down of civilian economic activity, and on the other hand by the large expansion of the re-armament programme. While hundreds of millions are being spent on the production of armament goods, the production of civilian goods declines and the number of unemployed increases. The coincidence of a new cyclical crisis and an armament boom raises a number of important issues which the Labour movement must study and solve.

1. *General Economic Conditions*, 1937 *and* 1938.

The index of production, constructed by the Board of Trade, reached its post-crisis record in the last quarter of 1937 ; since then it has declined considerably :

INDEX OF PRODUCTION.
1930 *equals* 100.

4th Quarter, 1937	136.4
1st Quarter, 1938	132.1
2nd Quarter, 1938	121.7
3rd Quarter, 1938	117.0
4th Quarter, 1938	126.3

Much more serious still than these general figures are the data for some of the most important industries of the country :

PRODUCTION IN FOUR IMPORTANT INDUSTRIES, 1937-1938.

Period.	*Crude Steel Output.**	*Merchant Vessels† under Construction.*	*Raw Cotton Delivered to Mills.‡*	*Building Plans.* §
4th Qtr., 1937 ..	1,139	1.13	125.2	27.1
1st Qtr., 1938 ..	1,085	1.09	116.7	25.4
2nd Qtr., 1938 ..	891	1.04	91.0	26.4
3rd. Qtr., 1938..	699	0.89	90.6	23.1
4th Qtr., 1938 ..	790	0.78	97.6	22.7
Decline per cent.	31	31	22	16

Production of crude steel has declined by almost one third ; the

*Average monthly quantity in 1,000 tons.
†At the end of the quarter, million gross tons.
‡Average monthly quantity in million lb.
§Estimated cost of building for which plans were approved by 146 Local Authorities in Great Britain, million pounds sterling.

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same holds true of the construction of merchant vessels. Raw cotton deliveries to the factories seem to have declined considerably less and in addition, there seems to have been an improvement during the last quarter ; but both impressions are inaccurate. The improvement in the period, October—December is a purely seasonal one ; during the last quarter of 1937 and 1936 the seasonal increase of production was 13 to 14 per cent. ; in 1938 it was only about 8 per cent. ; thus there was really not only no improvement, but the decline in production has continued. Furthermore, if the decline is "only 22 per cent.," this is due to the fact that the peak of cotton deliveries was reached already in the second quarter of 1937, while that of steel production and production in general was reached in the last quarter of 1937. Building construction too, has declined, as compared with peak conditions (in the second quarter of 1936.), not by 16 per cent. as the above figures indicate, but by about one third.

While production declined, unemployment increased :

REGISTERED UNEMPLOYED IN GREAT BRITAIN.

4th Quarter, 1937	1,518,000
1st Quarter, 1938	1,796,000
2nd Quarter, 1938	1,776,000
3rd Quarter, 1938	1,777,000
4th Quarter, 1938	1,814,000

In the fourth quarter of 1938, unemployment was about twenty per cent. higher than during the same quarter in 1937.

The crisis into which the Chamberlain government has led the British people is extremely severe. Every month during the last year has brought us nearer to conditions similar to those of 1931—but *there is no reason to assume that if the Chamberlain government continues in power, the crisis will stop at 1931 conditions ; it is very probable that this time the cyclical crisis will bring even worse conditions than those which prevailed eight years ago.*

The first months of 1939 seem to have brought a change in the situation. Iron and steel production has picked up and is higher to-day than at any time during 1938. Building activity seems to have passed the level of the corresponding period of last year. Leading members of the Government indicate that the tide has turned and that trade is on the up-grade again.

But the number of unemployed during the first quarter of 1939 was higher by a hundred and thirty thousand than in the first quarter of 1938. The tonnage of merchant vessels under construction in March, 1939, was less than half of that in March, 1938. And while industrial building activity is higher than last year, residential building activity is lower.

Briefly : civilian production continues to be depressed, and has in some branches reached a new low for the present crisis ; military production, on the other hand, is forging ahead.

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2. *Money for Arms.—Britain and Germany.*

With the country in this position the Government unfolds a plan of armament expenditures previously unheard of in peace time. Expenditure on defence services has developed as follows during the last seven years:

1932*	£102,990,000
1933	107,872,000
1934	113,870,000
1935	136,949,000
1936	186,072,000
1937	262,117,000
1938	400,000,000
1939	630,000,000†

It is planned that armament expenditure in 1939 should be almost two and a half times as high as in 1937, the peak year of industrial production.

If we estimate the national income for 1939 *as between* 4.5 and 5.0 *thousand million pounds, we come to the conclusion that the government intends to spend about* 13 *per cent. of the national income on armaments. This corresponds to the percentage spent by the German Fascist government around* 1934-35, *while the absolute amount of money spent is about the same as Germany spent in the financial year* 1936-37. *If we compute the amount of armaments expenditure per head of the population, we arrive at the astonishing fact that during* 1939 *expenditure on armaments will reach in Great Britain almost the same level which they have reached in Germany to-day.*

3. *Arms and the Crisis*

From these few comparisons we can easily realise the gigantic extent of rearmament in the present year. Can such an enormous state order (and the armament programme is nothing else), remain without a decisive effect upon economic conditions in general? Is it not to be expected that the crisis will, if not disappear, at least be very much mitigated by this enormous state order which must mean employment for hundreds of thousands of workers? Can one say, therefore, that this armament programme not only vastly increases the defensive and offensive military strength of Great Britain, but in addition will contribute very considerably to a general improvement of economic conditions in Britain?

At first sight this question may seem rather speculative. General economic conditions to-day are so extraordinarily complex that it seems to be very difficult to evaluate the influence of a single factor, even if it is such an important one as the present increase of armament expenditure upon conditions in general. But if we remember that actual expenditure for defence has increased by almost 140 million

*1932 means April 1932, to March, 1933; 1933 means April, 1933 to March, 1934 and so on.

†Preliminary figure, given by Sir John Simon (Budget Speech, April 25, 1939).

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pounds last year, that it has considerably more than doubled in 1938 as compared with 1936, and that it has increased progressively during the year 1938, then we see that we have a number of very concrete facts at our disposal.

One of the most important of these concrete facts is that while armament expenditure has been increased very considerably during the last year, iron and steel production has declined rapidly. A second very important fact is that although the building programme of the fleet was larger last year than in any year since the war programmes were put into effect, unemployment in the ship-building, ship-repairing and marine engineering industry is larger to-day than a year ago. A further interesting factor is that even such companies as Vickers, which are known for their large share in the armament programme, are judged by the Stock Exchange to make enormous profits on the armament business but otherwise to suffer so severely from the crisis that it is not worth while to pay for their shares higher prices than a year ago.

As far as the preceding year is concerned, therefore, one arrives at the conclusion that the armament programme has not had the effect of mitigating the crisis in such a way that it becomes less severe than the preceding crisis.

This does not mean, however, that without the armament programme the present crisis would not have been severer than it actually is. There can be no doubt that the armament programme executed during the last year has kept production higher than it would have been without it.

Nor, on the other hand, does it mean that the armament programme has not had an important effect upon certain branches of industry. Iron and steel production has definitely increased since February ; and some other branches closely allied to the manufacture of arms have benefited by the armament programme to such an extent that production is definitely on the up-grade in these industries.

We may conclude, therefore, that our experience since the end of 1937 has shown that the armament programme has kept production higher than it would otherwise have been, but that at the same time it has led to a very unequal development of production, a rapid decline in the civilian goods industries, and an equally rapid decline followed lately by a rise in the industries producing military goods ; and finally, that in spite of the mitigating influences which the armament programme has had, the crisis on the whole has deepened.

4. *The Budget and the Crisis*

What will be the effect of the Budget for 1939-40 on the general economic development ? In studying this question we have to look at both sides of the Budget, the revenue as well as the expenditure side.

Does the revenue side help to mitigate the crisis ? The revenue is to be increased by taxes and by loans. The tax increases chiefly hit

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the masses of the people and curtail their purchasing power. Tobacco and sugar prices have already been raised ; the tax increase on motor vehicles chiefly hits the middle classes, especially the tradesmen ; the combined increase of surtax rates and estate duties amounts to less than the increased taxation on tobacco alone.

It is obvious that a curtailment of the purchasing power of the masses of the people can only tend to aggravate the crisis.

While about 24 million pounds are to be raised by increased taxation £380,000,000 are to be raised by loans. What will be the effects of this enormous loan expenditure ?

In December, 1937, the LABOUR MONTHLY warned :—

> The chief characteristic, common to all big industrial countries to-day, is credit inflation and an unbalanced budget. Neither Great Britain, France, Germany, nor the United States has a balanced budget. In order to make up for this deficiency they issue loans, and in order to issue loans, in order, that is, to be able to borrow they prepare the loan market by a general increase of credit facilities.
>
> If this policy is continued—and the increasing armaments expenditure in all these countries make its continuance very likely—a general inflation is highly possible. Inflation means increasing prices and rapidly declining real wages.*

In July, 1937, already the LABOUR MONTHLY envisaged the possibility of inflation through increased reliance upon loans for armament expenditure. It warned :

> Inflation is by far the best means of cheating not only the workers, but all other groups of capitalist society who are not financially very strong. Inflation is the best means of hitting at the same time, and by the same means, all those groups within capitalist society who form the natural backbone of a People's Front.†

The enormous loan to be raised in the current year is a further and very determined step towards inflation. But the situation has changed in many respects as compared with 1937. At that time production and prices were increasing. To-day production is not increasing and prices are not rising. At that time we lived in a very modest boom ; to-day we live in the crisis phase of the trade-cycle. That means, in 1937 an inflation would have meant increasing prices and decreasing real wages. To-day an inflation means a smaller decline in prices than the solution of the crisis requires, or even a small increase in prices, and only in the latter stages, a really rapid increase in prices. But, however strongly the development of prices is modified, inflation means a prolongation of the crisis, for it means a curtailment of the purchasing power of the masses of the people.

Thus, we see that the two methods by which the revenue of the Government is raised, both contribute to a deepening of the crisis because both lead to a curtailment of the purchasing power of the masses of the people.

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*p. 736.
†p. 415.

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True, the methods of raising revenue will lead to a curtailment of mass purchasing power. But does the increased expenditure not lead to a much greater increase in purchasing power ? How does the expenditure side of the budget affect the masses of the people and the development of the crisis ?

Total Government expenditure is to be raised in the new financial year by somewhat over £250,000,000. During the year 1938-39 Government expenditure had risen by somewhat over £150,000,000 Has production increased last year as a consequence of the increased expenditure of £150,000,000 ? It has not, it has declined ! The effect of the new increase of expenditure, this time by £250,000,000 depends very much upon the development of non-military, of civilian production. And what do the civilian production figures show for 1939 ? Up to now they do not show any improvement ; on the contrary, many of them show a further deterioration. Does taxation of mass consumption goods tend to increase civilian production ? On the contrary, it tends to decrease civilian production! Do, therefore, present conditions indicate that the additional £250,000,000 to be spent mean additional trade activity ? Or is it not more probable that they may rather contribute to a temporary compensation, possibly a certain over-compensation of the crisis decline of the production of consumer goods and of consumer services ? The best one may expect from the additional expenditure of £250,000,000 is a slight pause in the crisis, to be followed by a new and more serious deepening of the crisis in the near future. For then either the effects of the inflatory tendencies of the budgeting methods will become very obvious, while at the same time the unsolved contradictions between production and purchasing power will emerge again, or—if budget expenditure does not increase further—the deflation crisis will hit industry with its full force.

5. *Defence and Unemployment.*

Mr. Keynes, who is distinguished by theoretical "brilliance" and ignorance of facts, has written two articles for the *Times** in which he explains that what will bother us in the future is a shortage of labour while unemployment will disappear :

> The Chancellor of the Exchequer should frame his budget on the assumption that the problem of abnormal unemployment will cease to exist during the financial year 1939-40, and that *all plans and special provisions for dealing with this problem should be dropped forthwith as being a waste of time and money.* (My italics.—J.K.)

The criminal arrogance of the second part of this sentence is almost incredible. Even if Mr. Keynes were sure on the basis of the most careful theoretical deliberations and on the basis of the most intense study of facts, even if everybody with whom he discussed his theory and facts would agree with him, how can anybody dare to be sure to envisage

*April 17 and 18.

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every possible development and then tell the executive of this country : do not bother about the more than 1½ million unemployed ; any thought given them, any money spent on planning for help to them is a " waste of time and money ! "

Mr. Keynes arrives at his conclusion by reasoning as follows : There will be a minimum of £200,000,000 new demand (because of the increase in government spending), and this new demand will lead to a further demand to the amount of £200,000,000. For, if the first two hundred million pounds are spent, this spending will lead to new production and services which will again provide spending power to the amount of £200,000,000. Thus, there will be an additional spending not of £200,000,000, but of £400,000,000. Assuming an output of £250 per head this would mean, according to Mr. Keynes, that about 1,500,000 workers would be re-employed.

However, suddenly becoming realistic, Mr. Keynes visualises the possibility of overtime and longer hours of work—a wonderful prospect for the employers !—and concludes, that instead of 1,500,000 about 750,000 unemployed will find work under all circumstances.

Now the total number of unemployed, including those who are not on the register, is about 2,000,000 to-day. Even if all Mr. Keynes' prophecies came to be true, there would still be about 1,250,000 unemployed.

Thus Mr. Keynes visualises : longer hours of work, overtime and 1,250,000 unemployed, and then he says : It is waste of money and time to bother about the unemployed ! And even if he should have forgotten about the hundreds of thousands of unemployed who are not on the register, or not counted as unemployed (which is highly probable, in view of his notorious ignorance of facts), he would still reckon between 750,000 and 1,000,000 unemployed as a problem not worth spending thought and money on.

But this is only part of the argument against Keynes. The other part of the argument is concerned with the question whether unemployment actually will be affected to the extent expected by Mr. Keynes through the spending of £200,000,000. Mr. Keynes has, for instance, conveniently forgotten (or perhaps it was genuine ignorance) that during the year 1938-39 expenditure has increased too, but that unemployment has increased in spite of it. Why does he expect government spending to be so much more effective in 1939-40 ?

6. *Conscription of Unemployed Youth*

In contrast to Mr. Keynes, the Government does not rely on increased spending as a sure way to diminish unemployment. One of the easiest ways of diminishing unemployment is to make work compulsory, to force the unemployed to do the kind of work the Government wants them to do, and finally, to pay the workers below the standard rates. To some capitalists this may seem too good to be true, and to some

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workers too bad to be true. And yet the Government is beginning to do it with the young unemployed. Since the whole procedure and also the arguments used by the Press are of the greatest importance in this connection, we must study this method of " abolishing unemployment " in greater detail.

On the evening of February 23, the *Daily Worker* published the following notice :

> Semi-official Conservative spokesmen, for the first time, admitted that the Government " has under consideration " a plan to force young unemployed men to undergo compulsory training or lose their unemployment pay.

On the next day the *Daily Telegraph* published a similar, though in one respect even more detailed, report; it explained at once on the basis of what decree this compulsory service could be introduced :

> The Board already has the power, under Section 40 of the Unemployment Act, 1934, in cases of " special difficulty " to insist that a man who refuses to avail himself of opportunities for employment or training, may be sent, as a condition of relief, to a work centre provided by the Board or by local authority.

On the following day the *Daily Telegraph* had an editorial, " Bread of Idleness," which gives already the whole outline of the case for the government.

It begins with a quotation from Mr. Chamberlain's speech in Blackburn (February 22) where he said : " It was never the intention, when our schemes of social service and social insurance were framed, that they should encourage deliberate idleness at the expense of the community." Then the argument for compulsory service :

> The whole end and purpose of making unemployment allowances to the young no longer unconditional would be to benefit those who are receiving such allowances by putting them in the way of earning wages and of so recovering their self-respect and their place in the economic life of the nation. . . . School attendance up to 14 has long been compulsory. Why, in the critical years of adolescence and early manhood, should not this compulsory education be continued in another form, where the alternative is not only to acquiesce in, but to subsidise the permanent idleness and demoralisation of part of the nation's youth ?

Compulsory labour service for the young now masquerades as education. One only wonders why the government should not go one step further and demand from the parents of the youths payment for the work they are allowed to do. One really ought not to ask too much from the state. After having provided educational facilities for the young up to the age of 14, free of charge (except, of course, the taxes which the masses pay and from which the money for education is taken),—can one expect the state to continue this education for one or two more years without any payment ? Especially if this form of education is really some kind of compulsory apprenticeship ! It is true the youth does not learn any skilled trade; it is true, the youth could do the same work without any help from the state—if economic con-

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ditions were such that he would not have to be unemployed; it is true, that his education consists in doing work which otherwise would have to be done by adult workers getting union rate wages. But these are minor points as compared with the wonderful educational opportunities the young worker gets, as compared with the alternative of eating bread of idleness. This is the case for the government.

Labour answers: We agree, something must be done for the unemployed youth. And everybody should know what this something is: work has to be found for them. As soon as work is found, the necessity for compulsion disappears. Compulsion is necessary only if the youths are to work under slave labour conditions, herded together in camps, paid only pocket money, and subjected to a rigid disciplining of their life. But not only the young workers would suffer severely from the government plan. The adult workers would be affected too. For, by forcibly employing young workers they would take away work from the adult workers, and by paying pocket money to the young workers, they would begin to undermine the wage structure for the adult workers. There is a very simple solution for the whole unemployment problem, for the young as well as adult unemployed workers: provide work. Even a capitalist government could spend 1,300,000,000 pounds sterling (the amount of the present budget) in such a way that unemployment could be cut to pre-war proportions.

7. "*Unemployment has its advantages*"

In this connection it is, however, important to point out that a considerable number of influential groups within the ruling class are not interested at all in doing away with unemployment. They are, on the contrary, eager to keep an army of unemployed.

Two years ago, a series of books emanating from Cambridge economists was published, and all of them explained that without a certain level of unemployment, national economy would break down. Full employment, according to these economists would lead to rapidly increasing wages, and these in turn would lead to inflation and all kinds of crises. Capitalism can only guarantee really sound economic conditions if there is a certain amount of unemployment, or as Mrs. Joan Robinson expressed it in her book, *Essays in the Theory of Employment*: "In general it may be said that something appreciably short of full employment must be regarded as the optimum." (p. 37.)

This, however, is only one line of argument for unemployment. Another reason why there should be unemployment was given by Sir John Anderson in his speech on the National Register on December 6 in the House of Commons:

> I believe that those people have an idea that there ought to be a job for everybody in time of peace, and do not realise that if we had a job for everybody in time of peace we should not have the people for the jobs that would have to be filled in time of emergency.

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The conclusion from this is: the higher unemployment to-day, the better our position in case of war.

There is no doubt that there are forces at work in this country which have an interest in keeping unemployment above a certain level—of course, for very national and patriotic reasons.

One cannot conclude this discussion of capitalist cynicism towards the problem of the unemployed without quoting the solution of the unemployment problem given by Mr. S. W. Alexander, *Evening Standard* City Editor—

> If we provide money for mental hospitals the chances are that we shall get more mental cases, and if we provide more and more money for unemployment we shall get more unemployed.

It is difficult to decide whether Mr. Alexander belongs to those who really prefer unemployment for others, as Mrs. Robinson and Sir John Anderson do—or whether he believes in his cure for unemployment and has to be ranked with Mr. Keynes as a dangerous quack.

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Anglo-Nazi Co-operation in South America

BY E. TUCKFIELD

WE VERY OFTEN make the error of underestimating Hitler's designs for world domination by considering them as nothing more than bluff or diplomatic tactics. The ruling class of Germany is ruthlessly determined in their search for raw materials and still greater profits to " protect," to annex, or to undermine and blackmail every single state in the world. The Nazis know very well that the methods of the Kaiser in 1914 of attacking all enemies at once brought defeat in 1918, and their whole policy therefore is directed towards isolating their future victims by mobilising their own forces and those of their " friends " in the countries concerned together with the forces represented by Daladier and particularly by Chamberlain.

Whilst Hitler made agreements at Munich, marched into Prague and Memel, subjugated Spain, the Nazis did not neglect the rest of the world, but on the contrary saw the necessity of still further conquests and with it the duty imposed upon them to speed up the activity of the various countries concerned.

The South American Republics especially present a marvellous prize, but of course what the Nazis want there is not the beautiful scenery or prestige, but the metals and coffee of Brazil, the oil of Mexico and Venezuela, the nitrate of Chile, and the wheat and cattle of the Argentine and Uruguay. Nazi Germany must control these raw materials to pursue its imperialist plans.

Nazi imperialism is making various attempts to gain control, and one of the ways is to make use of the 1½ million Germans living in the various states of South America. 750,000 live in Brazil, 200,000 in the Argentine, and 30,000 in Chile. These German settlers, however, did not fall an easy prey to Nazi propaganda, as they were themselves the descendants of people who had had to flee from persecution in Germany, either from the princes and junkers in the 18th century or after the revolution of 1848. Still we have to admit that the Nazis have had some success, and Nazi organisations are established in all the important centres.

The other way of gaining control is by economic penetration. If a sufficiently large percentage of the trade of a country is obtained, then pressure can be exerted to exclude rival imperialisms still further. In this sphere the Nazis have been more successful, but it is necessary to examine why.

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The *Times* in its issue of March 31, 1939, gave us a very important clue by just publishing the percentages of total imports of American, British and German goods by Brazil, Chile and Peru for 1932 and 1938. The figures show that in 1932 Great Britain and the U.S.A. together had 49 per cent. of the imports of Brazil, 38 per cent. of that of Chile, and 44 per cent. of that of Peru, whereas Germany had 9.15 and 9 per cent. respectively. By 1938, however, Germany's position was considerably strengthened. Germany's share of the imports of the three countries concerned increased to 25, 26 and 16 per cent. respectively. Who were the losers? The United States reduced their share of Brazil's imports from 30 per cent. to 24 per cent., retained it in Peru at 27 per cent., and even increased it in Chile from 25 to 28 per cent. The real loser was Great Britain whose share in the import business was reduced in Brazil from 19 to 10 per cent., in Chile from 13 to 9½ per cent., and in Peru from 17 to 8 per cent. Did the ruling class of Britain, furious at their losses, rush to offer the U.S.A. joint measures to prevent further Nazi penetration, which would have been an easy matter if we look again at the 1932 import figures? No, because that would have meant lining up with American democracy which would have given an enormous fillip to the democratic movements in the South American states. Instead they rushed to Düsseldorf to conclude an agreement with the ruling class of Nazi Germany so as to make their joint penetration against U.S.A. interests more effective.

The Nazis were much more honest than the British in their interpretations of the real meaning of the Düsseldorf discussions as can be seen from an article which appeared in the *Wirtschaftsdienst* of March 17, 1939, entitled "Germany and England as Partners in Foreign Trade."

> . . . As purchasers of raw material Germany, as well as England, hold a stronger position in world trade than any other Power. They would have the power to procure for the overseas planters and producers of raw material an economic upward trend which would become the more lasting the more closely both powers would be prepared to work for a policy of stable and, if possible, rising prices.
>
> . . . Looking at it from here the importance of the Düsseldorf talks go indeed far beyond the framework of purely business discussion.

"*Overseas* planters and producers of raw materials." These simple words reveal the whole treachery of Chamberlain. The Nazis know perfectly well, and say so in the above article, that the two ruling classes have agreed on the redivision of the world. The word "Overseas" means that for the moment Hitler will allow Chamberlain to keep the British Empire provided he lets Hitler have a free run in Europe (no reference to European planters, etc.), and works with him jointly in South America.

Even if the pressure of public opinion in this country prevented the ratification of that agreement, still it gives the Nazis the All-Clear signal for South America.

An indication of the breadth of the Nazi plans can be gathered from

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the list of directors of the United Steel Trust and Krupps, two of the most powerful companies of Nazi Germany. On the United Steel Trust Board we find a Mr. Carl Goetz who, amongst other qualifications, is Chairman of the Board of Directors of the German-South American Bank ; on Krupps' Board a Dr. Buecher who is Director of the Compania Hispano-Americana de Electricidad, Barcelona ; Fabrica de Lamparas, Madrid ; Geathom, Madrid ; Compania Electria Espanola, Bilbao, and also of the German South-American Bank. This bank incidentally financed the putsch of the Integralists in Brazil last year, and several leading employees of the bank were arrested subsequent to its suppression.

But Nazi Germany is not discouraged. In the *Wirtschaftsdienst* of January 6, 1939, an article on Brazil starts with the following words : " Brazil is doubtless the most interesting country in South America . . . " and later on in the same article it quotes from the *Observador Economico e Financeiro* (Rio, Nov., 1938), as follows :

> To the United States of America we can sell only coffee, and to the groups of British countries only very little because of Empire preferences. How is it with our connections with Germany ? This country possesses an industry which is complementary to our agriculture. In addition, the Reich plays on the European continent the rôle of a distributing centre which has become its lot through the power of historical, geographical and economic circumstances. We have therefore an interest in the maintenance and increase of commercial relations with Germany.

The Fifth Column, busy at work to prepare by economic means what it could not achieve by direct putsches.

At the All-American conference at Lima the Argentine was prominent in opposing several resolutions put forward by Mr. Cordell Hull, the Foreign Secretary of the Roosevelt administration which is quite understandable if we read the explanations given by Mr. Hubert Herring in the *Nation* of the 21st January, 1939, in an article on the Lima Conference. He traces it back to the fact that Great Britain has 2,000,000,000 dollars invested in the Argentine compared with only 700,000,000 dollars of the U.S.A. Also Great Britain buys Argentine meat, whereas U.S.A. does not, and 95 per cent. of all Argentine exports are agricultural products. One would assume therefore that Britain's position in the Argentine is absolutely impregnable, and that it could order the Argentine about. It certainly can tell the Argentine what to do when it comes to opposing the United States, but it is powerless to prevent the Argentine signing an agreement with Nazi Germany for the exchange of Argentine wheat against German railway material to the detriment of British trade. The *Financial News*, in their issue of 13th April, 1939, comments on the agreement as follows :

> The disclosures of subversive Nazi activities in the Argentine have drawn attention to German aims and methods in Latin-America. Last year it was the Brazilian Government that felt compelled to take drastic action to prevent the recurrence of the revolt of the local Nazis. The foreign organisation of the Nazi Party has its tentacles in almost every

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country, and works with methods similar to those used by the Moscow Comintern in its more active days. Now that the Comintern has been purged virtually out of existence its place as the world's chief mischief-maker has been taken by what may aptly be described as the Nazintern. Local organisations are given financial and moral support by Germany, and are engaged everywhere in activities inimical to the existing régime. It is a characteristic fact that even in Bulgaria it has been considered necessary to dissolve the local Nazi Party.

The discovery of the Nazi plot in the Argentine, it is interesting to note, practically coincided with the conclusion of an agreement with Germany for the exchange of Argentine wheat against German railway material. That agreement will strengthen Germany's position both economically and politically, and may also be regarded as a setback to America's efforts to check Nazi influence in Latin-America. At the same time it was a blow to British manufacturers of railway material, who have always regarded the Argentine as their traditional market. Perhaps the Argentine Government did not realise that, in accepting Germany's barter offer, it has strengthened the régime which is plotting against the integrity of Republic.

We give this article in full because it shows clearly that the ruling classes of Britain have no illusions at all about the aims and methods of the Nazis, but it also gives the game away by the phrase " . . . set-back to America's efforts . . . " thus admitting that Great Britain has not made and will not make any effort to check Nazi influence in Latin-America, even if it means losing Britsh trade.

If we probe into the Nazi plot in the Argentine again we find the hand of the German ruling class. The " C.I.E.F." of the 7th April, 1939, issued the following statement :

On April 3, 1939, it is reported from Buenos Ayres that, following the Nazi plot in Patagonia, the chief of the Nazi Party, Mueller, and the German Major von Schubert, Manager of Siemens-Schuckert, have been arrested. The Nazi plots in the Argentine are greatly facilitated by the deep penetration of the German trusts, and specially of Siemens-Schuckert, into the economic life of the country . . . .

" Siemens " in the Argentine are brothers of the " Siemens " in Spain, the centre of pro-Franco organisation, and first cousins of Siemens Brothers & Co., Woolwich, where the great strike took place recently.

The Nazis, realising that Chamberlain will put nothing in the way of their expansion in South America, have become more emboldened and come out openly against the United States of America. The *Essener National-Zeitung* (Goering's newspaper) had a long article on April 5th in which it tries to prove that the main enemy of all the states in Central and South America is the United States. After drawing attention to the great strategic importance of the Panama Canal, the paper writes as follows :

Two bombs on the Culebra Cut would be sufficient to make the whole canal unusable in ten minutes. Therefore the Culebra Cut is the most sensitive spot of Yankee Imperialism. (The word " Yankee " is used in the original.—E.T.)

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Is it therefore so entirely fantastic as American circles suggest that the Scadta Company (German Air Traffic Company) in Colombia has only been formed so as to bomb the Panama Canal at the right moment?

The conquest of Spain gave the Nazis the golden opportunity of speeding up their nefarious work in the various South American Republics, because a new argument has been presented to them, namely that of the national unity of all the Spaniards, both in Spain and in the South American Republics.

On April 2nd the Annual Meeting of the Ibero-American Institute took place in Hamburg. President of that Institute is General Faupel who, from 1936-7 was Nazi ambassador to General Franco. All the Ministers and Consuls of all the South American states were invited, and in a speech the German Secretary of State, Ahrens, stressed the importance of the Franco victory in the Spanish motherland for the South American states. The next thing we shall hear will be that General Franco will demand self-determination for all the Spaniards and that Spain is given back all their old colonies. The reactionary elements of the various Latin-American states would doubtless welcome it, but the democratic people of Central and South-America realise that this would not be the way to achieve full freedom and democracy, but that their fate would be similar to that of the Austrians and Sudeten Germans who, now under the Nazi yoke, are ground down more than ever before.

In order to strengthen Nazi propaganda in South America the Duke Adolf Friedrich von Mecklenburg arrived in South America. He was before the war Governor of Togoland, a chauvinist of the worst sort, who already before the war supported German claims to certain parts of South America. The Duke travels as a member of the German Economic Council and is accompanied by a large number of high S.S. leaders. In the Argentine the Duke offered the building of motor roads against the delivery of wheat; in Bolivia, railway material against copper; and in Chile, typewriters against rice. His fellow travellers in the meantime had full discussions with the various Nazi leaders in the countries concerned. In all cases the slogan is: "Fight against Yankee Imperialism."

The people of Central and South America are fully alive to the danger which threatens them from Fascism, and the democratic movement, especially in Mexico, Cuba and Chile, has made tremendous strides. We also have to recognise that the Nazi putsches in Brazil and the Argentine have not been successful. The South American people can, and will, move still further forward, and it is our task to see that as many obstacles as possible are moved out of their way. The best help we can give to them is to remove Chamberlain so that the active co-operation of the ruling classes of Nazi Germany and Great Britain for the still greater exploitation of the South American people is stopped once and for all.

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Chartism and the Fight for Peace

BY SALME A. DUTT

When the French Revolution first proclaimed to the world the brotherhood of all nations, the vision of universal happiness and of world peace kindled the imagination of all democratically-minded people. The rising bourgeoisie saw the barriers between the nations fall and peaceful exchange of their products of industry established. Men dreamt of Europe as one big family of nations and of a World Republic. The following amendment to the Declaration of the Rights of Man was proposed by Robespierre in 1793 :

I. The men of all countries are brothers, and the different peoples should assist one another as much as possible like citizens of the same state.

II. He who oppresses one nation declares himself the enemy of all.

III. Those who make war on a people to stop the progress of liberty and destroy the rights of man should be attacked by all, not as ordinary enemies, but as assassins and rebellious brigands.

IV. Kings, aristocrats, tyrants, whoever they are, are slaves in revolt against the Lord of the earth, the human race, and against the legislator of the universe, Nature.

The hopes of peaceful relations among the nations were shared alike by the workers and the rising bourgeoisie ; but it was the workers alone who understood the real meaning of internationalism and democracy, and consistently fought for peace among the nations in fighting againt all exploitation and oppression.

By the time of Chartism the workers already felt themselves closer to the workers of other countries on the continent and America than to their own bourgeoisie, and were markedly free from national prejudices. Frederick Engels in the dedication to the Working Classes of Great Britain of his book on *The Condition of the Working-class in England in* 1844 was able to write :

> With the greatest pleasure I observed you to be free from that blasting curse, national prejudice and national pride, which after all means nothing but *wholesale selfishness*—I observed you to sympathise with every one who earnestly applies his powers to human progress—may he be an Englishman or not—to admire every thing great and good, whether nursed on your native soil or not—I found you to be more than mere *Englishmen*, members of a single, isolated nation, I found you to be men, members of the great and universal family of Mankind, who know their interest and that of all the human race to be the same. And as such, as members of this family of " One and Indivisible " Mankind, as human beings in the most emphatical meaning of the word, as such I,

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> and many others on the Continent, hail your progress in every direction, and wish you speedy success. Go on then, as you have done hitherto. Much remains to be undergone; be firm, be undaunted—your success is certain, and no step you will have to take in your onward march will be lost to our common cause, the cause of Humanity !

The internationalism of the working-class grew and took its shape with the development of class consciousness, with the understanding of the common interest and common task of the workers of the whole world. From the recognition of the necessity to abolish competition in the ranks of the workers in order to combat the attacks of the employing class, only a step further led to the recognition of international solidarity in order to defeat the international domination of the bourgeoisie.

The general humanitarian conception of bourgeois democracy that " all men are brothers " gradually changed into a conception of unity and solidarity of all working people in their struggle against oppression and exploitation, and for political and economic emancipation. The profession of solidarity of the peoples of the early stages of the working-class movement led soon to practical endeavours for common international organisation and action.

Already in the eighteen-thirties the British working-class movement began to express this advance towards proletarian internationalism, though a deeper understanding was first reached towards the end of the Chartist Movement. The co-operative socialists, under Robert Owen's influence, saw a vision of co-operative communities established in all countries and a world republic achieved. In 1832 delegations and addresses were sent to France and the United States stressing the solidarity of the working people of all nations and the need for the reorganisation of society. The National Union of the Working Classes, founded in 1831, celebrated the anniversaries of the French Revolution and of the Polish insurrection, emphasising the part that the workers played in the revolutionary struggles. The *Poor Man's Guardian*, the organ of the National Union, chastised counter-revolutionary moves and followed carefully the foreign policy of the British Government.

The coming of Chartism deepened among the workers the understanding of internationalism, and of its direct relation to their own struggles for emancipation. Although the Chartists often expressed the general conception that " all men are brothers " and that " the nations of the earth have but one brotherly interest," by *men* was distinctly understood the *working people*. In November, 1836, the newly-founded London Working Men's Association, the first Chartist organisation, declared in an address to the Belgian workers :

> We perceive the injustice practised on us, and feel the slavery from which we have not yet power to free ourselves. Our emancipation, however, will depend on the extent of this knowledge among the working classes of all countries. (William Lovett, *Life and Struggles*, p. 98.)

In an address to the " Working Classes of Europe and especially to

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the Polish People " of 1838, the same organisation states :

> While we are zealously labouring to diffuse a knowledge of true principles amoug our own brethren we are not unmindful of that great principle of democracy, that " *all mankind are brothers.*" And though the perversion of truth and justice has called forth the exclusive feelings of the few, to conspire and rebel against the happinesses of the many, yet when knowledge shall have expanded the intellect of mankind, they will assuredly perceive that all the nations of the earth have in reality *but one brotherly interest.*
>
> Possessing this conviction, we feel persuaded that every effort that can be made towards eradicating those national prejudices and bigoted feelings which the selfish and despotic rulers of mankind have implanted and perpetuated for their own advantage, will tend towards that great consummation of national and universal happiness, when equality of rights shall be established, and when " *men shall* love one another."
>
> Fellow working men, have you ever asked yourselves by what powerful spell the productive millions of Europe are held in subjection to a puny insignificant number of human beings ?
>
> Fellow producers of wealth ! seeing that our oppressors are thus united, *why should not we, too, have our bond of brotherhood and holy alliance ?* Seeing that they are powerful through our ignorance, why should not we unite to teach our brethren a knowledge of their rights and duties ? Perceiving that their power is derived from our ranks, why should not we unite in holy zeal to show the injustice of war, the cruelty of despotism, and the misery it entails upon our species ?
>
> Let us, therefore, bretheren, cultivate feelings of *fraternity among nations and brotherly union in our respective countries.* (William Lovett, *Life and Struggles*, p. 150.)

A closer contact with the revolutionary refugees strengthened the understanding, especially among the London Chartists, of proletarian internationalism which reached its concrete expression in the formation in 1845 of the first international organisation, " The Society of Fraternal Democrats." This organisation can be considered as the forerunner of the International. The Society was formed on the initiative of George Julian Harney, one of the best leaders of Chartism, whose views came closest to modern Marxist socialism. The programme of the Society declares :

> We renounce, repudiate and condemn all political hereditary inequalities and distinctions of caste ; we declare that the earth with all its natural productions is the common property of all ; we declare that the present state of society which permits idlers and schemers to monopolise the fruits of the earth, and the productions of industry, and compels the working-class to labour for inadequate rewards, and even condemns them to social slavery, destitution and degradation, is essentially unjust.
>
> Convinced, too, that national prejudices have been, in all ages, taken advantage of by the people's oppressors to set them tearing the throats of each other when they should have been working together for their common good, this society repudiates the term " foreigner," no matter to whom applied. Our moral creed is to receive our fellow men without regard to " country," as members of one family, the human race ; and the citizens of one commonwealth, the world. (Quoted by Th. Rothstein, *From Chartism to Labourism*, p. 131.)

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The best exponents of proletarian internationalism during the Chartist struggles were Harney and Ernest Jones. Their expressions of internationalism are already free from bourgeois ideology and are very close to modern proletarian internationalism which, however, could only develop with the conscious fight for socialism. The following views were expressed by Harney in a speech in London, 1846:

> Nationality has in other times been necessary; it saved mankind from universal and irredeemable slavery. In our day, too, the invoking of the spirit of nationality in some countries is indispensable to rekindle life in those countries. But we must have no King Czartoryski. We must have no kingdom of Italy such as the Italian deputies solicited of The Holy Alliance in 1815. We must have the sovereignty of the people in both countries; the education of the people in both countries; the education of the people, and at least, the progressive social advance of the people, ever progressing, until the people own no masters but themselves, and enjoy the fruits of their labour, uninfluenced by oppressors in any shape or name. In other countries, such as England and France, there is no need to rekindle national feelings; on the contrary, the efforts of the good men in both countries should be directed to the abolition of the remaining prejudices which a barbarous cultivation of the spirit of nationality in days gone by called into existence.
>
> I appeal to the oppressed classes of every land to unite for the triumph of the common cause. "Divide and conquer" has been the motto of the oppressors; "Unite and triumph!" should be our counter motto.
>
> The cause of the people in all countries is the same—the cause of labour, enslaved and plundered labour. The men who create every necessity, comfort and luxury, are steeped in misery. Working men of all nations, are not your grievances, your wrongs the same? Is not your good cause, then, one and the same also? We may differ as to the means, or different circumstances may render different means necessary, but the great end—the veritable emancipation of the human race—must be the one aim and end of all. (*Northern Star*, February 14, 1846.)

In 1848 Ernest Jones wrote in the *People's Paper*:

> Is there a poor and oppressed man in England? Is there a robbed and ruined artisan in France? Well, then, they appertain to one race, one country, one creed, one past, one present and one future. The same with every nation, every colour, every section of the toiling world. Let them unite. The oppressors of humanity are united, even when they make war. They are united on one point: that of keeping the peoples in misery and subjection. Each democracy, singly, may not be strong enough to break its own yoke; but together they give a moral weight, an added strength, that nothing can resist. (February 17, 1848.)

The hopes of world peace of the radical bourgeoisie came to nought by the inherent contradictions of capitalism. "World Peace" became a pious pacifist profession of bourgeois democracy. But the working class since the beginning of its independent movement, has consistently fought for peace. It has recognised wars among the nations as detrimental to its own struggle for emancipation. It has opposed militarism, colonial policy and the foreign policy of the bourgeoisie.

Although the Chartists in principle rejected all wars, they were by no means for peace under any conditions, for peace at any price. Distinctions

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were made between "just" and "unjust" wars. Every struggle of the oppressed, either national wars of liberation or the armed struggles of oppressed classes, were supported and considered as part of the struggle for the ultimate liberation of mankind. In a speech on September 22, 1845, Harney said: "We hate all wars, except those which are forced upon a people by internal oppression or invasion from without" (quoted by Engels, "*Das Fest der Nationen in London*," 1845.) In 1847 on the occasion of the Portuguese rising, Harney declared:

> The peoples are beginning to understand that foreign as well as domestic questions do affect them; that a blow struck at Liberty on the Tagus is an injury to the friends of freedom on the Thames; that the success of Republicanism in France would be the doom of Tyranny in every other land; and the triumph of England's democratic Charter would be the salvation of the millions throughout Europe. (*Northern Star*, June 19, 1847.)

Even those among the Chartists who were inclined to pacifism approved and celebrated the revolutionary struggles on the Continent, the struggles of the smaller nations against oppression by the big powers and the struggles for independence of the colonial peoples.

The working-class press of the eighteen-thirties—*The Crisis*, *The Pioneer*, *The Poor Man's Guardian*, declared already in emphatic terms their opposition to war and hatred of wars. In 1834 James Bronterre O'Brien, the theoretician of the Chartist movement, in his "Charter of the Rights of Humanity," which was adopted at a large meeting of the workers in London, demanded the end of wars and proposed a yearly congress of nations to be held successively in different countries to settle their differences. William Lovett, the father of the People's Charter, and an ardent fighter for peace, made a similar proposal to the French workers in 1844 and the American workers in 1846:

> That we request them to use their influence with the nations of the world, to establish a *Conference of Nations*; to be composed of three or more representatives, chosen *by the people* of their respective countries, to meet annually, for the purpose of settling all national disputes that may arise, *by arbitration*, without having recourse to war. (William Lovett, *Life and Struggles*, p. 304.)

He suggested that the sums expended in war and armaments should be used for "the education and improvement of the people of their respective countries."

That wars and colonial conquests are not in the interests of the working people was made abundantly clear to the workers by the spokesmen of the Chartists. O'Brien wrote in 1834 in the *Poor Man's Guardian*:

> The "statesmen" who made war on France in 1793 did so because war was agreeable to the capitalists and profit-hunters. It was for the double purpose of crushing that revolution and of opening a new field for the "enterprise of commerce" that our moneyed interests urged that war against France. (September 13, 1834.)

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Lovett, in an address to the French workers in 1844, said:

> We are induced to make this appeal to you, the working classes of France, in particular, as the warlike spirit has of late been sought to be fomented between us, by those who have either party views to promote, exclusive interests to protect, or who, like vultures, hope to thrive on the carnage of war.
>
> The prevalence of this insane conduct has caused us to appeal *to you, the Working Millions—you*, by whose industry the munitions of war must be raised—*you*, who are mainly selected to be the tools and instruments of warfare—*you*, who must perform the bidding of some aristocratic minion, were it to war against freedom abroad or to exterminate your brothers at home—*you*, who have most cause for lamenting the sacrifices and bereavements of war—*you*, who must bear (and are now bearing) the burdens in peace which past wars have inflicted—*to you we appeal*, who with the working millions of England must bear the brunt and sacrifices of war, and of you we ask for a verdict condemnatory of the strife which the parties we have alluded to are seeking to foment.
>
> We address you, *the working classes*, because we believe that *the interests of our class are identified throughout the world.* (William Lovett, *Life and Struggles*, p. 300.)

The "Fraternal Democrats," in a manifesto to the British and American workers in 1846, when a war threatened between Britain and the United States over Oregon, on the Pacific coast, warned the workers that a war would

> distract public attention from your grievances, would add to your burdens, might probably afford a pretext for your government curtailing your scanty liberties.
>
> There is no foot of land, either in Britain or the Colonies, that you, the working-class, can call your own. They, your masters, will take the land—they will fill all the higher situations, civil and military, of the new colonies—your share will be the slaughter of the combat and the cost of winning and retaining the conquest. Here is one argument which the advocates of war address to the cupidity of the two nations, viz., "whichever nation shall command the ports of the Pacific will ultimately command the trade with China." Suppose so, let the men who profit by "trade," and make fortunes by "trade," let them struggle for commercial supremacy if they will, but the victims of trade have no good reason for fighting for the ports of the Pacific or any other ports. (*Northern Star*, March 7, 1846.)

The Chartists strongly condemned the colonial conquests and the oppression of colonial peoples and demanded the right of self-determination for the colonies. The petition to Parliament of the London Working Men's Association in 1837 in support of Canada's demand for self-government, states:

> That your petitioners are deeply impressed with the conviction that the colonial policy of England has for many centuries past been fraught with tryanny and injustice towards the mass of the people. We seem to have considered them as legitimate objects of our prey, or as places where the shoots and underlings of despotism might practise their oppression shamelessly and regardless of consequences. (William Lovett, *Life and Struggles*, p. 103.)

In the address to the French workers of 1844 Lovett writes:

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> We would greatly rejoice if every colony of England were *self-governed* and attached to us by no other tie than that which should unite all countries—that of enlightened self-interest and brotherhood of man. (Ibid, p. 302.)

The above-mentioned manifesto of the Fraternal Democrats in 1846 declares :

> The actual settlers on and cultivators of the soil, these are the rightful sovereigns of the soil, and should be at perfect liberty to choose their own form of government and their own institutions.

As we have seen, the Chartists did not limit themselves to declarations of hatred of war and of oppression, to declarations of brotherly love among the nations, but were sharply following and actively combating every move of the Government and taking active interest in the European revolutionary struggles. The Chartist press severely criticised Palmerston's support of the Tsarist policy against the national minorities and especially his anti-Polish policy. As soon as a danger of war with France and America became apparent public opinion was mobilised, meetings and demonstrations held, leaflets distributed, fraternal manifestos issued. In 1848 all over the country meetings and demonstrations were held in support of the French Revolution and the government warned against interference in the internal affairs of France. At a meeting in Lambeth on March 2 an address of support to the French people was adopted and a delegation elected, including Ernest Jones and Harney, to deliver the address in Paris. The Polish Revolution of 1831 and the Cracow rising of 1846 were commemorated. When in 1849 the reaction in Europe began to triumph, strong and angry protests were made against the brutal suppression of revolutions, especially in Hungary. Although engaged in their own life and death struggle, the Irish fighters for freedom from British domination had no better friends than the Chartists.

But the greatest historical achievement of Chartism in the fight of the working class for internationalism and for world peace was the formation of the first international organisation, " The Fraternal Democrats." It was not yet able to achieve much because nowhere else in Europe did there exist an independent working-class movement, hardly even a modern working class. But it was the beginning from which, in conjunction with the Communist League, modern working class internationalism takes its rise.

In this year of Chartism's centenary there are rich lessons to be learnt from this fight of the Chartists for international peace, and for international working-class solidarity. Here, too, as in the battle for democracy, the struggles of the Chartists are especially close and living to us in our struggles to-day. Once again " the peoples are beginning to understand that foreign as well as domestic questions do affect them ; that a blow struck at liberty on the Tagus is an injury to the friends of freedom on the Thames." Once again " the oppressors of humanity are united even when they make war." Once again " each democracy,

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singly, may not be strong enough to break its own yoke ; but together they give a moral weight, an added strength, that nothing can resist."

The conditions to-day are profoundly changed. They fought in the period of rising capitalism. We fight in the period of its decline and break-up. They fought when the struggle for democracy was still advancing against the old ruling order, and the rising industrial bourgeoisie was still pressing forward along the path of democratic advance. We fight when the ruling powers of capitalism now turn their guns on democracy, and the fight for democracy more and more clearly carries with it the fight for socialism. They fought when the working class movement was only coming into being. We fight when the working class has now decades of experience and organisation behind it, and has already won power and built up socialism in the largest state in the world. But the lessons they taught still live for us. In this sphere of the fight for peace, for the world unity of the working class and the democratic forces against oppression and war, the Chartists blazed the trail along which it is the pride and the privilege of their descendants to carry forward the fight to victory.

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DOCUMENTS OF THE MONTH

The Paris International Peace Conference

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON PROBLEMS OF THE DEFENCE OF DEMOCRACY, PEACE AND HUMANITY TO-DAY, HELD AT PARIS ON MAY 13-14, 1939.

I. MANIFESTO OF THE CONFERENCE.

MEETING IN PARIS on May 13 and 14, 1939, this Conference of 600 delegates, representative of the world of labour and thought, from 28 countries, appeals to the peoples of the whole world and to men of all countries to unite in effective action to prevent the outbreak of war, to help those nations which are oppressed and threatened, to support the victim of aggression and fascism, and to defend the rights of civilisation.

The forces of peace, of progress and of liberty must build through their unity, an indestructible barrier against fascist aggression.

The whole world has lived long enough beneath the terror of war and slavery.

For years now, war has raged in three continents. It has piled ruin to ruin, added misery to misery over huge territories in Abyssinia, in China and in Spain and in Albania.

Violating their pledges, the tyrants of Berlin, Rome and Tokyo are adding daily to the list of their crimes against the independence and integrity of the nations.

They are intensifying their attacks against all that is precious in our civilisation against the political and economic rights of man, against freedom of thought and conscience, against science and against the essential dignity of mankind.

Encouraged by the weakness and betrayal of others, the fascist aggressors become ever more ambitious.

Having marched into Austria and Czechoslovakia, ravaged heroic Spain with fire and blood, the fascist aggressor has seized Memel and annexed Albania. To-day it is Poland that is threatened. To-day the fascist aggressors dream of dominating Yugoslavia, Rumania and the whole Balkan Peninsula. To-day they are bringing pressure to bear on Switzerland, Belgium, Holland and the Scandinavian countries. To-day they aim to dominate the Mediterranean. To-day they are demanding colonies in which to carry through their ruthless racial policies. To-day they are plotting and intriguing even in South America.

Having set out on such dangerous adventures, international fascism threatens to plunge the whole world to terrible disaster.

Remembering the tragic experiences of the past months, Conference declares that, in order to drive back the war makers, in order to check those who are destroying all the most precious conquests of the human spirit, in order to save peace and, at the same time, to prevent slavery and death, the vital duty of all countries opposed to aggression is to unite their material and moral forces without reservation and without delay.

Conference proclaims that, if peace is to be successfully preserved, it is essential that France, Britain, Poland and the Soviet Union should co-operate completely, loyally and on equal footing with each other.

Such a union would receive the unhesitating support of the U.S.A., and of all peoples devoted to peace. Its resources are inexhaustible.

The peoples of the world, determined on peace, can no longer allow those responsible for the international policy of their countries to hesitate and manœuvre, without risking slavery and death.

They must face up to the offensive of international fascism which, to gain criminal ends, resorts to all kinds of economic pressure, to disruption and corruption, and by means of its agents, attempts to prepare bases of attack *within* the countries it has listed for destruction.

Recent world events have proved that it is not by capitulation but by courageous, unflinching and unpanicked resistance that the designs of the war-makers can be brought to nought.

It is not because the fascist dictatorships are strong that they are aggressive. They resort to war, they destroy freedom, they debase the things of the spirit, in the hope that, thereby, they will escape the inevitable result of their policy and stifle the gathering storm of revolt and anger of their own peoples.

The victories they have gained in Asia, Africa and Europe are precarious victories. It is true that they have been able to fall like wild beasts upon certain peoples who have been foully abandoned by certain of their allies. But they will never succeed in extinguishing the flame of independence in the hearts of the Austrian, Czechoslovakian and Spanish people, or in breaking their will for freedom and their confidence in ultimate liberation.

We are millions inspired by one ideal, determined to bar the road to fascism, determined never to accept slavery by

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renouncing our rights as men, as workers, as citizens or by trampling in the dust our highest spiritual values.

The people of the colonial countries, too, are ready to join with all their force in the defence of liberty and of peace. But they will be all the more determined and ready to do so if they are given all the democratic rights and freedom which fascism wishes to destroy.

United, the enemies of aggression are more powerful than any. This unity is overdue. To-day there is not another minute to lose. That is why, speaking especially to all the organisations of the working class, we make an urgent appeal for the organisation of a great International Conference of Labour. That is why we fervently desire that international trade union unity shall be established.

United, we shall be able to organise help for the people of Spain, Czechoslovakia, Albania, Abyssinia and for all those nations suffering from or threatened by violence.

United, we shall be able to ensure that civilisation and humanity are respected.

United, we shall be able to establish a real collective security which would defend peace against the aggressors.

Let us be confident. The unity of all the forces of the people, the unity of all those who have the cause of progress and civilisation at heart, determined on the complete and absolutely loyal union of all powers opposed to aggression, will save the peace of the world.

II. Appeal to the British and French Peoples.

At this critical moment of world history, when war or the menace of war hangs over all peoples, the representatives of the peoples of 26 countries, assembled in Paris, address an earnest appeal to the peoples of Britain and France.

The key of world peace is to-day in the hands of Britain and France.

If Britain and France to-day take the initiative, in collaboration with the Soviet Union and the United States, in building up a firm common front of all states desirous of maintaining peace against aggression, then Peace can still be saved.

The peoples of all countries are anxiously looking to Britain and France to fulfil this responsibility

No state, not even the British Empire, can hope to stand alone against the world offensive of fascism.

If Britain and France should fail to fulfil this responsibility, or should hope to win an illusory immunity by the sacrifice of another nation, the result would be a universal catastrophe which would engulf also the British and French nations.

The traditions of the British and French peoples in the past show glorious records of struggle for democratic ideals in which they have led the way for the world.

We are sure that the policies of retreat or of the sacrifice of other peoples to fascist conquests do not correspond to the real wishes any more than they correspond to the real interests of the British and French peoples.

Therefore, with confidence, we appeal to the British and French peoples to exert with all the power of their democratic forms and organisation, their pressure to secure that such a policy for the collective maintenance of peace is pursued by their governments and to ensure that their governments shall loyally carry out all the obligations of such a policy.

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CORRESPONDENCE

Anglo-Nazi Co-operation in Central Europe

Dear Sir,

The enclosed copy of a letter which appeared in the May 6 issue of *Chemistry and Industry* may interest your readers.

I have copied the letter in its entirety so that you may see it in its true context. Obviously the author is quite ingenuous and the letter is not written with any political motive, but I think the substance of the last paragraph is very significant.

It certainly looks like another example of the work of the F.B.I. and that there is some working agreement whereby we allow Germany to exploit definite areas. Read, also, in the light of this month's article on "Chamberlain's Anti-Americanism," the letter is quite enlightening.

Yours faithfully,
H. B. HAWLEY.

Extract from "Chemistry and Industry," 1939, 58, 446, (*May* 6, *No.* 18.)

GERMAN INDUSTRIAL AIMS IN CENTRAL EUROPE.

Sir,

The editorial of No. 16 of the 22nd instant, under the heading, "German Industrial Aims in Central Europe," contained a statement running as follows.—

"It is perhaps significant that the President of the Republic, Professor Ignacy Moscicki, is himself an industrial chemist of distinction whose name is associated with the chemical concerns at Chorzow and Moscicki, (named after him)."

Being an ordinary member of the Society of Chemical Industry on the one hand, and on the other hand, a former (in 1921-22) collaborator of Professor Ignacy Moscicki and present representative of the "chemical concerns" mentioned by you, I beg to note that you have disfigured their name. The virtual name is, in Polish, Zjedoczone Fabryki Zwiazkow Azotowych w Moscicach i w Chorzowie, meaning in English, United Nitrogen Works at Moscice and at Chorzow.

I cannot help taking advantage of this opportunity to make an observation highly actual just at this moment with reference to the contents of the aforementioned article. The great successes gained by Germany in Central and East Europe apparently without any opposition are, not in the least part, due to the indifference and negligence of the leading British Industrial quarters, shown for a long time with respect to all suggestions and propositions of co-operation on the part of Central and East European industry. This indifference and negligence are in crass contrast with the eminent interest and enormous diligence displayed by the German industry in this direction. Particularly as regards Poland, I myself have made the experience that most of the business propositions made from this end to the British industry are being transmitted by that industry to their "German friends" for further operation, thus it frequently happened that Polish firms received replies from Germany to their enquiries addressed to England. I have repeatedly pointed out this evil to people who occupy leading positions in the British chemical industry, hitherto however without any result and success.

I am, Sir, etc.,
(*signed*) ROMUALD F. ROSSBERGER.

Krakow, April 25, 1939.

British Policy and the Soviet Union

Dear Sir,

It is evident that the present British Government is resisting to the last any definite agreement with the U.S.S.R. for a defensive pact. The grounds for this are obvious in their general policy.

There is, I believe, reason to consider as extremely probable that there is also a definite obstacle in existence to prevent the present Government reaching anything in the nature of a defensive pact with the Soviet Union. It is that, in anticipation of and connivance with a German attack on the U.S.S.R. through the Baltic States (strategically for Germany the most

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feasible, because she can then bring her naval strength in the Baltic into play—the underlying reason, of course, for the Anglo-German Naval Agreement of 1935), this Government has already made secret commitments with Estonia and Finland for the use of the aerodromes in those countries for British aircraft operating against the U.S.S.R. in the event of such a war. These commitments appear to have been in existence for at least ten years. Any genuinely reciprocal agreement for mutually defensive purposes between Great Britain and the U.S.S.R. would of course be incompatible with the continuance of such commitments as I suspect to have been made.

Yours faithfully,
HAROLD GRENFELL.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

Apostles of Revolution. Max Nomad. (Secker and Warburg.) 15s. 467 pp.
National Reserves for Safety and Stabilisation. L. St. Clare Grondona. (Allen and Unwin.) 7s. 6d. 189 pp.
Germany's Economic Position. J. Kuczynski. (Anti-Fascist Relief Committee.) 6d. 72 pp.
Russia's Way to Victory. J. R. Campbell. (Modern Books.) 2d. 32 pp.
The New Propaganda. Amber Blanco White. (Gollancz.) 7s. 6d. 383 pp.
Penn'orth of Chips. Charles S. Segal. (Gollancz.) 3s. 6d. 128 pp.
Chemistry: A Survey. Alan Beck. (Gollancz.) 1s. 6.d 96 pp.
Dividends from Defence. (Labour Research Department.) 2d. 24 pp.
Britain's Best Ally. Richard Goodman. *When Britain Arose.* Salme A. Dutt. (Key Books, Nos. 5 and 6. Fore Publications.) 2d. each. 64 pp.
Eyewitness in Czechoslovakia. Alexander Henderson. (Harrap.) 10s. 6d. 336 pp.
World Affairs and the U.S.S.R. W. P. and Zelda Coates. (Lawrence and Wishart.) 6s. 251 pp.
Ukraine and its People. Hugh P. Vowles. (Chambers.) 5s. 224 pp.
A Handbook of Freedom. Edited by Jack Lindsay and Edgell Rickword. (Lawrence and Wishart.) 6s. 408 pp.
Modern Science. Hyman Levy. (Hamish Hamilton.) 21s. 736 pp.
A History of Socialism. Sally Graves. (Hogarth Press.) 5s. 308 pp.
Why I am a Democrat. Edited by Richard Acland, M.P. (Lawrence and Wishart.) 2s. 6d. 160 pp.
Democracy and Socialism. Arthur Rosenberg. (Bell.) 21s. 6d. 369 pp.
Black Coffins and the Unemployed. Wal Hannington. (Fact.) 6d. 96 pp.
Labour in the West Indies. W. Arthur Lewis. (Fabian Society and Gollancz.) 1s. 44 pp.
Hitler Calls This Living! A Member of the German Freedom Party. (Sidgwick and Jackson.) 6s. (Paper 2s. 6d.) 226 pp.
La Pensée: Revue du Rationalisme Moderne. No. 1. (Editions Sociales Internationales.) Fr. 20.
Our Food Problem. F. le Gros Clark and R. M. Titmuss. (Penguin Books.) 6d. 182 pp.
The Ship of State. Edward Jenks. (Duckworth.) 6s. 196 pp.
The Community and Social Service. William Blackshaw. (Pitman.) 7s. 6d. 266 pp.
World Federation. Oscar Newfang. (Barnes and Noble.) 12l pp.
A Critique of Russian Statistics. Colin Clark. (Macmillan,) 6s. 76 pp.

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BOOK REVIEW

A Marxist Classic

New Data for V. I. Lenin's Imperialism : the Highest Stage of Capitalism. Edited by E. Varga and L. Mendelsohn. (Lawrence and Wishart. 6s.)

ONE WOULD ANYHOW welcome a new edition of that socialist classic, Lenin's *Imperialism*. One specially welcomes this new edition, because of the wealth of well-selected and up-to-date material that the editors have provided as concrete illustrations to the main points in Lenin's analysis. These new data are conveniently arranged so as to run concurrently, on the opposite page, with the relevant paragraphs of Lenin's book. At the end one of the editors summarises this new material and brings out its more important implications in a separate Note of some 50 pages. The publishers can be congratulated on a well-printed edition (as well as on a striking dust-cover) which, with its 320 pages and numerous statistical tables, is a notable achievement at the price.

While none of the data presented is newly discovered, or the result of original research or analysis, the collection of so much material from scattered sources and its presentation in this form, is an important contribution to Marxist literature. To Marxist students it is certain to prove a constant and invaluable source of reference for many years to come. One might mention particularly the convenient tabulation of data concerning the concentration of production for Germany, U.S.A., France, Japan and this country and the up-to-date list of the leading monopoly-groups in various industries. The section on monopoly-prices, with its figures of recent price movements, on the free market and in monopolised markets, will be of particular interest to many. There is also a wealth of financial statistics about banks and their relations with industry and about export of capital. The " unevenness of development under imperialism " is lucidly illustrated by a table giving production figures for Britain, Germany, U.S.A., France and Japan for various years since 1880 in the case of coal, pig-iron, steel and cotton, and again by a table contrasting the growth of " old " and " new " industries. In a section entitled " Supplementary Data " stress is laid on the chronic excess-capacity and under-utilisation of resources (with consequently inflated unemployment) which characterises the post-war period ; and the final Note of Mendelsohn, in stressing the increased unevenness of rates of development in recent years, presents an interesting examination of the relative position of the leading capitalist Powers. " The question of the unevenness of the *political* development of the various countries," he writes, " which became very much more marked in the period of the general crisis of capitalism, owing to the sharp increase in the unevenness of *economic* development, is worthy of special examination . . . . The enormous increase in this unevenness at a time when the crisis of the capitalist system is becoming ever so much more acute is an extremely important factor for the development of the world proletarian revolution."

There are one or two minor criticisms that, perhaps, a reviewer should mention. Some may feel disappointed that so little is said about the special features of fascist economy and fascist imperialism and about the important changes in the world political situation, and the Marxist reaction to these developments, in recent years. But the editors can probably reply that to

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have gone at all deeply into such questions would have been to go beyond the function of editors, adding footnote material to a classic work. It seems a pity that the translator should throughout have used " billion " in the American sense (=the European milliard) without any explanation, and that in places figures even for this country should have been given in (pre-war) francs or dollars and not translated into £s. The source-references in most places are full and impressive, and display a discriminating acquaintance with the available material on the part of the editors (as one would, indeed, expect from them). But in one or two places I have noticed a mixing of secondary and primary sources in listing references, which might suggest to a critical mind a lack of first-hand knowledge or else of discrimination (for example, a listing of secondary newspaper references together with the *Statistical Abstract* on p. 235). But these blemishes are few, and weigh lightly in the balance compared with the quality and the value of this new edition of a Marxist classic.

MAURICE DOBB.

An American Symposium

Tomorrow in the Making. Edited by John N. Andrews and Carl A. Marsden. (McGraw-Hill, 12s. 6d.)

THE EDITORS OF this book apparently set out with entirely praiseworthy intentions. They wanted to provide informative material from authoritative sources in order to help " all who want to get behind the headlines in the daily newspapers and to participate intelligently in the affairs of our democracy." Unfortunately desire has outrun fulfilment. The volume is " reverently dedicated " to " those builders of to-day and tomorrow who lived yesterday and bequeathed to us certain inalienable rights." Many of these builders would turn in their graves if they had to read some of the chapters which have been " reverently dedicated " to them. Few people will object in a symposium of this kind to having, for example, a died-in-the-wool isolationist like Senator Nye contribute the chapter, " Is Neutrality Possible for America," or an open fascist write on, " Is Fascism a Way Out," providing Earl Browder is permitted (as he is) to write the section " Does Communism point the Way." But what is infuriating and lamentable is to find such an important chapter as " Democracy as a Way of Life " used by the author to hurl abuse, which is as childishly melodramatic as it is unfounded, at the Soviet Union, because history doesn't work out just as Mr. Sidney Hook thinks it ought to. (It is ironical to recollect that Mr. Hook, whose sensitive soul shudders at the " obscenity " of calling the Soviet régime democratic, apparently was not so revolted as to be unable to take advantage of the unrivalled facilities provided by the Marx-Engels Institute in Moscow to develop his philosophical studies there !) Mr. Clyde Miller wallows in similar spleen under the guise of helping his readers to " get behind the headlines " on the question of Propaganda and Ideas. In short, the Editors would have saved a lot of time and trouble if they had gone straight to

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Trotsky and asked him to write most of the first and second sections of the symposium, for the Master's Voice is plainly heard through his disciples, not the least ardent of whom is Norman Thomas.

Several of the contributors have done an extremely good job at *presenting* the problem, but when it comes to some indication of what we are to do to-day if tomorrow is to materialise according to our desires, then like modest violets, they shrink into silence, or at best a hesitating mumble. Thus, Mr. H. E. Barnes, who writes very stimulatingly on "The Current Crisis," makes the challenging and perfectly correct statement:

> Until we recoil from outmoded ideas and institutions as decisively as we do from an old-fashioned vehicle or gadget . . . . there is no hope of preserving civilisation.

But just as he is raising our interest along the lines of how civilisation *is* to be preserved, he tails off into a final warning that unless we "shoulder our grave responsibilities" we shall "soon enter another dark age." and there he leaves us.

This irritating indecision is characteristic of almost every contributor. Tantalising sentences quicken the senses to a feeling, "Ah! Now this fellow's going to let us know what he really thinks and what we ought to do." But he rarely does, and one is left with the inevitable feeling that these people who are setting themselves up as guides to the groping ones have literally not the faintest idea of how to grapple with the problems which are menacing our tomorrow, or if they have, are utterly terrified to express themselves frankly and fearlessly.

The trouble is that, with one or two exceptions, the Editors have gone to entirely the wrong people. The men and women who are "making tomorrow" in America are not the Norman Thomases, the Sidney Hooks, the Sokolskys and the Nyes. They are the men and women who are building up the democratic front so that in less than a decade the home and foreign policy of the United States has been revolutionised. They are the men and women who have forced the great Corporations like Ford, General Motors and the United States Steel Corporation to recognise and enter into collective bargaining with the C.I.O. Unions. They are the men and women who are combating fascism whenever and wherever it rears its head in the United States. They are the men and women, to be found in all sections of American society, who do not merely recognise the problems of to-day, but clearly and persistently explain to their fellow men and women what we must do to ensure that we ever live to see tomorrow. And whether the reader accepts the theories of Communism or not, it is impossible to escape the conviction that Earl Browder's contribution is the only one which gives a decisive answer as well as posing a positive question.

MARJORIE POLLITT.

An Important History

A History of Europe from the Invasions to the Sixteenth Century by Henri Pirenne. (Allen and Unwin. 21s.).

IT IS NOT often that a great historian is cut loose from his books and files and forced to step back and take stock of his understanding of history. Yet this is what happened to Pirenne when he was arrested in 1916 and taken from

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his professorial Chair at Ghent to the petty Thuringian town of Kreuzburg. The result of this accident was his *History of Europe*, which he planned to continue up to our own time but which only reached the Reformation. Relying only on his richly stored memory he produced a book quite remarkable for its spaciousness, proportion and boldness.

Pirenne was one of those of whom Lenin wrote in *Materialism and Empirio-criticism*, who, without being avowedly materialists, are very largely materialist in practice where their own scientific work is concerned. Consequently his book has merits which we do not usually find in non-marxist writers. He sees history as a unity, not something divided artificially into compartments labelled "economic," "social," "political," "constitutional" and so on. He is able to present a genuine synthesis in which the primacy of the material basis is normally apparent. He shows, for example, how the economic collapse of the classical world necessitated the collapse, or more accurately perhaps, the atomisation of the state and how this atomisation is reflected in the world of ideas so that

> the period of local government was also the period of local saints . . . . They were, so to speak, the great vassals of God, under whose protection men were glad to place themselves.

With equal clarity he shows how the reorganisation of the state in new forms at the close of the feudal period was also the result of the supercession of subsistence by money economy.

Further, he is aware of the importance of class and the class struggle. No other bourgeois historian, so far as I know, devotes so much attention to the rise and decline of social classes. His treatment of the class struggles in Flanders and in the Lombard Communes is admirable, making clear both their internal character and their relation to such events in general European history as the Hundred Years' War and the struggle of the Papacy with the Hohenstaufen. He emphasises, too, the class nature of the early heretical movements as well as of the Reformation proper.

Naturally his materialism is not entirely consistent, and the inconsistency is most apparent where religion is concerned and above all when he discusses the conflict between Christianity and Islam. Thus he can write at one point that the Crusades were "purely and exclusively religious," and that

> its motive was wholly spiritual, divorced from any temporal pre-occupation: the conquest of the Holy Places.

Yet he says a few pages later that the Papal *excitoria*,

> vaunted in one breath, the quantity of relics to be found in Asia Minor, the charm and luxury of its customs and the beauty of its women.

Later again, he relates both the Crusades and the Norman Conquest of England to pressure of population.

It would be possible to dwell at length on such shortcomings: it is even more tempting to point to a few of the many merits of this *History of Europe*. Perhaps it will be sufficient to say that, read with critical attention, it gives a better idea of the general movement of its subject than any other work of its scope that has yet appeared in English. It sets a very high standard of clarity and insight for the Marxist historian who attempts to cover the same ground.

A. L. Morton.

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An Enlightened Democracy ?

Education: To-day—and To-morrow, by W. H. Auden and T. C. Worsley. (Hogarth Press. 1s. 6d.)
The People's Schools, by M. Morris. (New People's Library. Gollancz, 1s. 6d.) (Left Book Club Edition, 6d.)

NONE OF OUR national institutions more clearly reveals the class structure of capitalist society than our educational system. Contrast the big Public Schools, where a few thousand scions of plutocracy are taught to become rulers, with the 21,000 elementary schools whose 5,000,000 pupils are destined to become the humble, hard-working, thrifty, highly-exploitable subjects. The "Old School Tie" remains the symbol of that class-consciousness through which every Public Schoolboy expects, as a matter of course and right, to find all the avenues to wealth and power (highest posts in the armed forces and Civil Service, diplomacy, politics, law, industry, finance, property, and the professions) open to him. As Auden and Worsley point out (p. 16), for a child of this class "to leave school early is a social disgrace because it puts him on a par with those who have to."

"Those who have to" are the millions of working-class children who leave school at the age of fourteen to go directly into industry. Thousands of their schools "fall below any decent minimum of amenities or convenience," says Dr. Spencer, ex-Chief Inspector of the L.C.C. ("The People's Schools," p. 52). Almost half of these children are crowded into classes of over 40, rendering adequate education impossible. Even to-day one sixth of elementary school teachers are uncertificated and without sufficient training for one of the most highly skilled of all jobs.

Such are the main features of our educational system admirably presented in these two booklets. It is clear that even this inadequate system would never have been brought into being if capitalism (in the highly complicated industrial civilisation which it has created) could have made shift with an illiterate working-class population and if the workers themselves had not continually demanded education.

The creation by capitalism of a new middle-class (technicians, managers, foremen, heirarchy of clerks, accountants, etc.) necessitated also the provision of secondary and technical education. This was much expanded in the first thirty years of this century; and the fact that 10 per cent. of elementary school children go on into the secondary schools and that a working-class child even on occasion wins his way into a university has been hailed by bourgeois educationists as proof of the democratic "classless" nature of our education system. Nevertheless,

> "the class structure remains, though there is an opportunity for some to pass from one class to another; what happens to them after they have climbed is another matter. But if all the donkeys cannot get the carrot, it remains true that a small percentage of them can." (Auden and Worsley, p. 28)

Mr. Morris gives an excellent objective account of the facts of our educational system to-day, including the provision for adult education and the teachers' organisations. He rightly stresses the importance of the child's health as the basis of education and the terrible wastage of the nation's human resources, and concludes with a series of proposals for immediate

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educational advance which will have the backing of the majority of teachers and educationists. To get these proposals translated into realities will require a vast movement of public opinion led by the organised forces of the working class ; that is why this little book, an armoury of facts and suggestions should be widely read.

Mr. Morris has deliberately refrained from entering the field of pedagogical and educational theory. He is, of course, aware that an advance in the quantity—the material provision—of education for the working-class child means a change in its quality.

Messrs. Auden and Worsley, having briefly summarised the facts of our educational system, add a short sketch of the history of educational philosophy; but their analysis, though based on the Marxist postulate of the class-struggle, is altogether too schematic. They give exaggerated importance to individuals like Rousseau, Arnold, and especially D. H. Lawrence, but their comments on these are illuminating and should stimulate our Left-wing teachers to think more than they have done about educational theory. Their suggestions, particularly on the training of teachers and the contents of education, are well worth discussion.

These two little books show the need for a more comprehensive treatise on English education, both its theory and practice, from a Marxist point of view. Many liberal-minded teachers and educationists, seeing the masses of our people at the mercy of Press, cinema, wireless, sports-rackets, etc., bewildered at the fact that a State system of education has not automatically produced an " enlightened democracy," are groping blindly, trying out all sorts of experiments, snatching at shadows. It is high time that the lesson given by the Soviet Union on rendering a people really democratic and enlightened was translated into terms of English educational experience and a real lead given for the solution of our problems.

S. H. Fomison.

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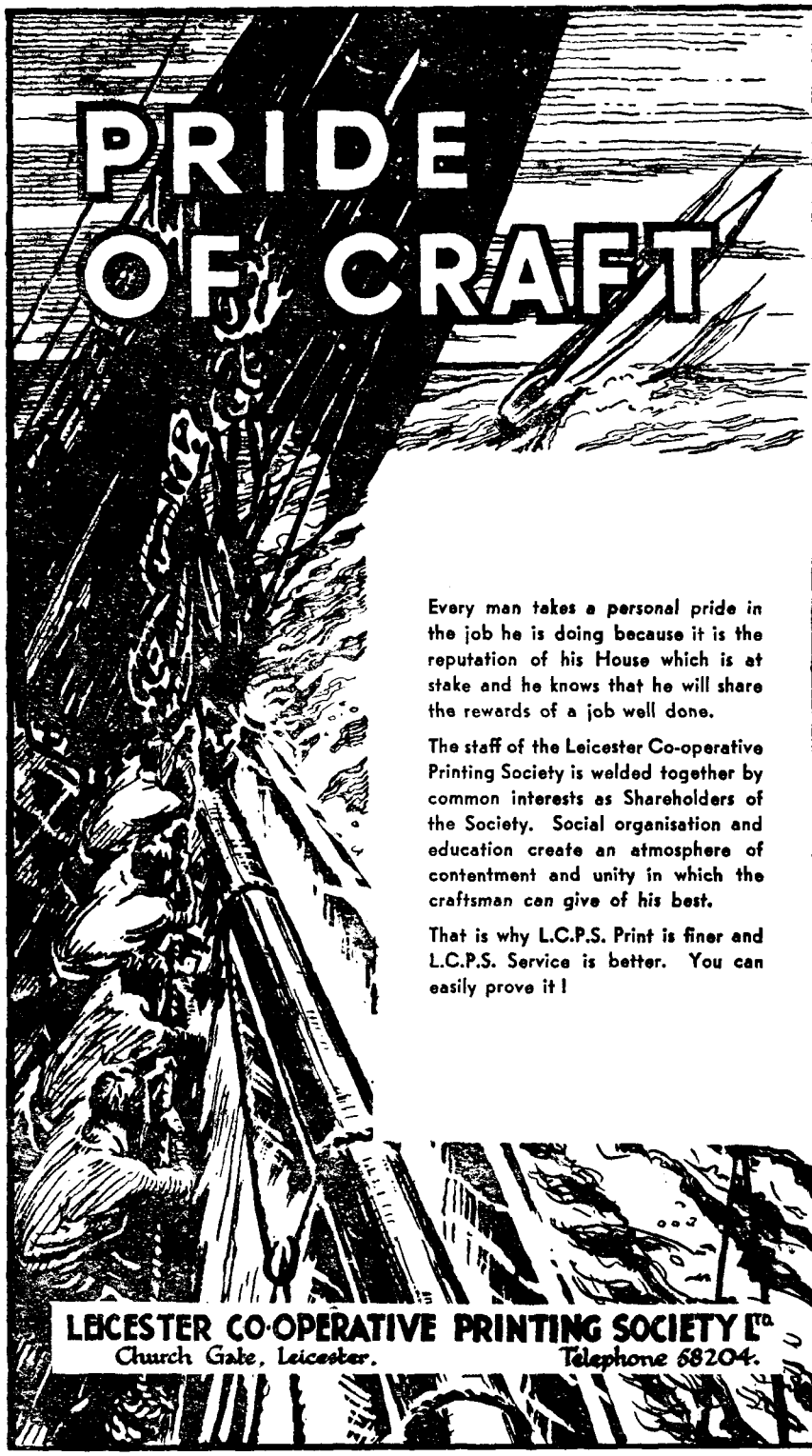
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